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By his entrance into human life through the gate of birth Jesus made himself the Prophet of Childhood, and thus in the highest sense the prophet of universal humanity. ❧ ❧ ❧ ¶ No one may think meanly hereafter of a child because of its frailty and helplessness, for the omniscience and omnipresence and the omnipotence of God lay latent in the Child of Bethlehem. ¶ And so Christ prophesies over every cradle, and is forever lifting up the babes of the world, and saying, "They are little, and weak, and know nothing at all; but they shall grow into the wisdom and strength of archangels, and their heads shall be among the stars."—John T. McFarland

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The Editors' Outlook

JUST back of the shattered little French town of Belleau, and under the crest of a great hill, lies an American cemetery, with its hundreds of white crosses.

On Christmas morning a procession wound its way up from the village and entered the cemetery. At the head of the company walked three men, one of them in the conventionally dapper garb of a French official, another in the flowing robes of a priest, and the third in a plain American suit. Behind them trudged a troop of Boy Scouts, very military and alert to the significance of the moment, and behind them came the children and the towns-people of Belleau.

In the center of the cemetery, about the base of the lofty flag pole, the procession halted. And there they bowed their heads in prayer—praying that the sacrifices of those American soldiers might bring the meaning of Christmas home to the world with new emphasis. And a little later, after a short address, the children scattered among the graves and hung holly wreaths on those crosses which bore the simple word, "Unknown."

So did Christmas day begin in the countryside about Belleau, with a mayor, a priest, and a Protestant pastor leading the community in a fitting memorial to those American boys who fell in the Great War.

And the joy that was theirs throughout the rest of the day was the more complete because of their Christmas visit to Belleau Wood.

THE United States Bureau of Education, in cooperation with the American Legion and the National Education Association, has undertaken to promote the general observance of an "American Education Week," December 3-9. President Harding has given assurance that he will issue a Proclamation, and the Governors of the states will be invited to issue proclamations. Every type of national organization has been invited to cooperate, including such organizations as women's clubs, Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions and other business men's clubs, the American Federation of Labor, the Y. M. C. A., the Knights of Columbus, churches and other religious bodies. Thousands of newspapers are expected to cooperate, some with special education editions, others with editorials and articles stressing the needs of education. We have assurance that the motion picture houses will cooperate. State Departments of Education have been invited to cooperate and already there has been a most encouraging response and assurance from the chief educational officers of the states that they will undertake to push the movement in their respective states.

Certain features of education have been selected as especially worthy of being stressed at this time. These are so arranged as to permit a special emphasis on each day of the week. The days, together with appropriate topics, are as follows:

Sunday—December 3, 1922. For God and Country
1. Education in the home
2. Education in the school
3. Education in the church

Slogan—A Christian nation cannot fail

Ministers of all denominations are urged to preach sermons either morning or evening on education. All communities are urged to hold mass meetings. Speakers will be supplied by American Legion Posts throughout the country for meetings on that day.

Monday—December 4, 1922. American Citizenship Day
1. Children today, citizens tomorrow
2. Naturalization for all men and women
3. Help the immigrants to become Americans
4. The duties of citizenship

Slogan—Americans all by 1927
Visit the schools today

Tuesday—December 5, 1922. Patriotism Day
1. The flag—the emblem of freedom
2. Music as a nation builder
3. Universal use of the English language in the United States
4. The citizen's duty to vote

Slogan—Visit the schools today
Patriotism is the basis of a happy nation

Wednesday—December 6, 1922. School and Teacher Day
1. The necessity of schools
2. The teacher as a nation builder
3. The schools' influence on the coming generation
4. America as an educated nation

Slogan—Visit the schools today
Better trained and better paid teachers, more adequate buildings

Thursday—December 7, 1922. Illiteracy Day
1. Illiteracy as a blot on our nation
2. No illiteracy in 1927
3. A citizen's duty toward the uneducated
4. No immigration until America can care for its own and those who have adopted this as their native land

Slogan—Let every citizen adopt and teach an illiterate to read and write
Visit the schools today

Friday—December 8, 1922. Equality of Opportunity Day
1. Equality of opportunity in education for every American boy and girl
2. Needs of rural schools
3. Consolidation

Slogan—Visit the schools today
"A square deal for the country boy and girl"

Saturday—December 9, 1922. Physical Education Day
1. Playgrounds
2. Physical education and hygiene
3. The great out of doors
4. Conservation and development of forests, soil, roads, etc.

Slogan—A sick body makes a sick mind
Playgrounds in every community

THE CHURCH SCHOOL will welcome reports of Christmas exercises including programs, pageants, special services, with descriptive accounts and pictorial illustrations. From this material the Editors will make such selections as are suitable for use in connection with the next Christmas number of the magazine.

God With Us

ONE of the most significant titles applied to our Lord is Immanuel, "God with us." To be sure, it refers primarily to the days of his incarnation and sojourn among the people of Judea and Galilee. But its meaning goes far beyond this episode in the eternity of his existence. He was, indeed, in a peculiar sense with the beloved and devoted friends who walked with him along the shores of the Galilean Sea; but at least a part of the purpose of that brief and marvelous self-manifestation was to make sure and more significant to all who should come after and should study the record of his life in the flesh the fact of his perpetual presence.

Accordingly, when he was about to return through the gateway of physical death to his glory with the Father, he would not have his disciples think of him as separated from them. "I will not leave you orphans," he said to them. "I will come unto you." And when he sent them forth upon the great mission to which he had called them he repeated this assurance in those immortal words in which heroes of the faith all down through the ages have found strength and inspiration: "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world."

Long ages before the angel chorus announced his advent to the shepherds of Bethlehem the great prophets had discovered the possibility of direct personal communion with Jehovah. "Enoch walked with God." Abraham "was called the friend of God." Elijah heard his voice in Horeb and Amos among the vine-clad hills of Judea, and Isaiah saw his glory in the temple.

But precious as was the fellowship of those men of vision with the divine Friend, it ought to mean a vast deal more to us who have learned in Jesus what manner of Friend he is. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by many portions and in many ways, . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, . . . the effulgence of his glory and the very image of his substance." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also."

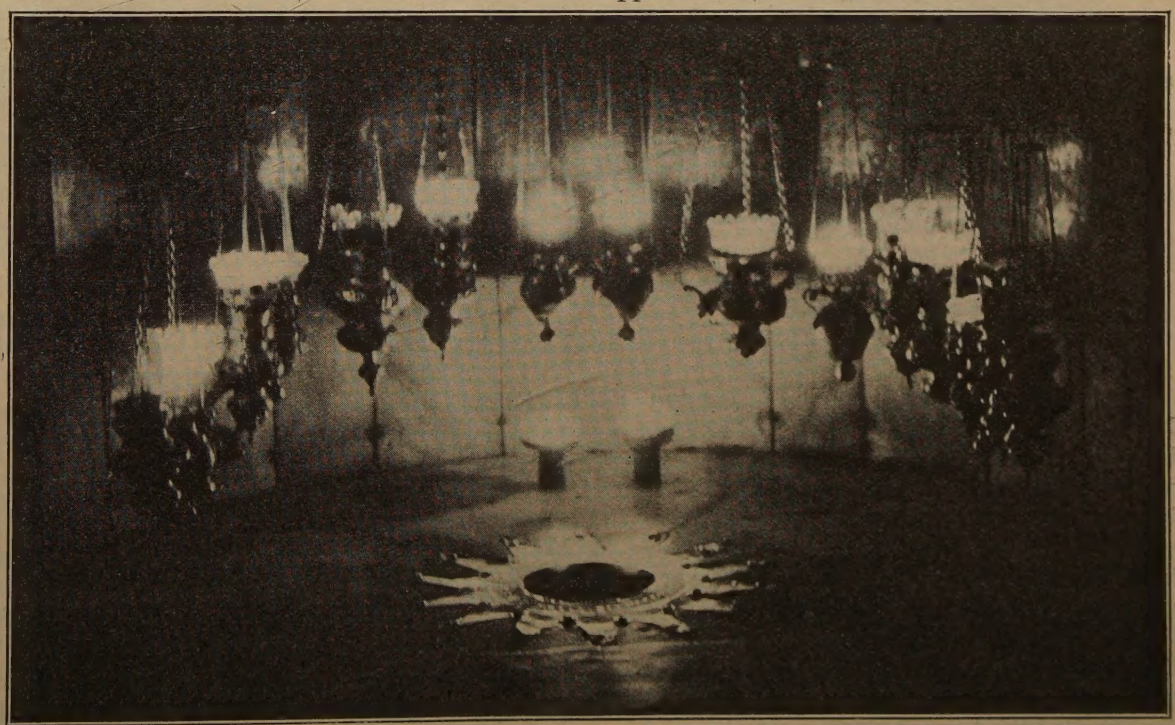
The God who is with us, our comfort in sorrow, our light in darkness, our strength when burdens are heavy, our all-sufficient and unfailing Friend, is the God who is revealed to us in Jesus. He is the only perfect Word of God. All our visions of truth and beauty, all our systems of philosophy and theology "are but broken lights of him." In Jesus we see his full-orbed image and know his fatherhood and love.

And this revelation adds immeasurable worth to the assurance of his perpetual presence and companionship. With such a Friend to go with us, we can face the duties, the difficulties, the solemn mysteries of life not only with equanimity, but with triumphant courage, singing with our saintly Quaker poet:

> "I know not what the future hath
> Of marvel or surprise,
> Assured alone that life and death
> His mercy underlies."

Of all this the return of the Advent season reminds us. But it reminds us also that if this possibility is to become a reality of our personal experience we must take pains to make it so. We must "walk in the light as he is in the light." We must seek the purity of heart which gives clearness of vision. We must take time for those spiritual exercises of meditation and communion which Jeremy Taylor speaks of as "the practice of the presence of God." One trouble ever with the best of us in these days of steam and electricity and all the bustle and hurry they symbolize is that, as Wordsworth puts it, "the world is too much with us." We waste our powers in going and doing, in getting and spending, and have neither time nor inclination for those habits of devotion which are needed for the quickening of our spiritual senses. "We have banished from our lives the angel of silence."

And yet there has never been a time when the vision which waits in such habits was more needed than it is today. For the one way to rest of soul and religious assurance in this day of intellectual ferment and social upheaval and world chaos is in the assurance of the reality and personal friendship of such a God as is revealed to us in the peasant King who was born in Bethlehem of Judea. If Christmas shall help to make this assurance more vital and positive, it will bring us blessing for which we cannot be too grateful. Said John Wesley when he faced the grim agony of his dying hour, "The best of all is God with us." And that is always the best.
—E. B. Chappell.



The grotto beneath the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. Photographed by the light of the candles kept constantly burning.

The Angel Sheathes His Flaming Sword

By Thomas Tiplady

WHEN man obeyed the serpent instead of God, he was driven out of paradise, and an angel was set to guard it against his return. Eden was lost because man had defiled himself and become unworthy of the position God had given him. Man was driven out, but the garden was not destroyed. An angel with a flaming sword was installed as guardian. No flower was to be destroyed. The garden was to remain fair and beautiful for man's return, but he could never reenter it as he passed out of it. He passed out a fallen man. The garden was to remain untainted. And it was to remain empty until man had been redeemed and could pass the gate without taint. The pure is for the pure. And the ideal must not be lowered to our level. We must be raised to the ideal. To reenter paradise man must pass the test of the flaming sword, and the sword is fatal to all who are tainted with evil. Only he is invulnerable who has been cleansed from all defilement of flesh and spirit. He, and he alone, may pass the gate, for the sword has no power over him. Nor did man pass out of Eden without hope of return. As he took his last look at the unfading flowers and ever-singing birds a voice from heaven assured him that a child should be born of woman who would slay the poisonous serpent, and before whom the guardian angel would sheath his flaming sword as he led mankind back to paradise.

From the beginning men had looked for a deliverer but when he came he took them by surprise:

"They were looking for a king
To slay their foes and lift them high:
Thou cam'st, a little baby thing
That made a woman cry."

They expected him amid the tumult of war and of strange manifestations of almighty power,

"But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The windes with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joyes to the milde ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave."

He came incognito—came as a peasant child. Even his mother did not know him as he slept against her breast. He came incognito—came as a child—to teach mankind the wonder and mystery of childhood, and to insure that every child shall be received with reverence and be given a fair chance. After all, every child comes into the world incognito. We know not who the child is, what he will become, nor what he will do. Did Mrs. Shakespeare, as she crooned over her baby William, know that she was nursing on her knees the greatest singer the world has ever known? Did Mrs. Washington, as she dandled her baby George on her knees, know that she was taking these liberties with the first President of the United States? By coming as a child, and with his divinity veiled, Jesus has given to childhood a sacredness nothing else could have given. We treat the little stranger who comes to us with a new respect. We honor him as a king and speak of him—even though republicans—as "his majesty the baby." We treat him kindly and hope that, when he has shown us who he really is, he will be kind to us. And if he turns out to be no king but just an ordinary man of the people, we love him none the less, and he still wears a crown to our eyes, though no one else can see it. By coming as a child the "King of kings" has made all children kings, and it is by treating all children as kings that we shall soonest reach the kingdom of God.

Jesus came poor, and took his first sleep among asses and cows in a wayside stable, to teach us that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his possessions"—perhaps the most difficult lesson man has to learn if we may judge by the fewness of the people who learn it. He began with nothing and never acquired anything. He was born penniless and died penniless. Why? To teach us that paradise is open to all. There is none disfranchised. Lying asleep on a peasant woman's knee, there in a stable, Jesus tells us with a silence more awakening than the trump of Gabriel that, though we may have nothing of this world's goods, all that is sweet and beautiful, noble and pure, all that makes life rich and full and deep, may be ours. All children are not and cannot be born with a silver spoon in their mouths, but the birth of Jesus in a stable teaches us that every child is born with the key of heaven in its hand and should not throw it away. The one perfectly successful life which has been known on earth began and ended amid homelessness. He who lived the fullest, richest, deepest and most beautiful life the world has known was born poor, never sought to be anything else, and died poor. It is a tremendous fact, and should lead us during Christmas to a new spiritual stock taking.

Jesus is always the Light of the World, and even from the stable there streams light enough to enable us to make a revaluation of the things which make up our life. How different the world is when we see it in the light of Jesus! Perhaps we have been thinking that, because we are poor, it was impossible to live a full and rich life, but now we look in the stable at Bethlehem and know better. Perhaps we have been spending too much of the precious time allotted to mortals in making a fortune instead of using it in developing our souls and enriching the souls of others. A peep through the door of the stable will correct our perspective and teach us that it is better to have a shrivelled purse than a shrivelled soul. The little baby in the stable cannot talk, and yet what lessons he teaches us! How the light from him gilds the place he is in! It was only a stable where there were only asses and cows, but, with him there, all is fair and beautiful. How his presence changes life! A cottage

with him inside is fairer than a palace where he is not. No life is mean which is filled with him and no circumstance can be ugly when he is in the midst. Well did he say, "I am the light of the world." He *is* the sunshine of the world. And the sunshine makes all the difference.

Accustomed to the glories of heaven he is content to have a stable for his birth-chamber. He "who spake the world from nought" is content to toil patiently at a carpenter's bench for daily bread. He who spread the sky for a roof over the earth becomes homeless and has "not where to lay his head." All this he did to turn our faces again toward Eden and teach us how to live. Though he could call on legions of angels to come to his aid he allows the Roman soldiers to drive the nails through those hands which healed the sick and opened the eyes of the blind and which had never wronged any man; yea, through those feet which had ever run on errands of mercy for his fellow men. All this he suffered that he might wash our robes and make them white. Some day he will lead mankind back through the gates of paradise and present us to his Father; and when the angel, who guards the gate, sees us clad in his white robes of righteousness he will sheath his flaming sword. With reverent feet we enter the sacred stable this Christmas-tide and, like the shepherds from the hills, bow in worship before the Child who came to save us.

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O Babe divine of Bethlehem,
Hark to the lullaby
Which angels sing unto their King
From out the starlit sky:
For o'er the earth there floateth
The cradle-song of heaven,
To bless the Child, so meek and mild,
The Father's love has given.

O resting place in Bethlehem,
How bright the midnight sky!
For all agleam with splendor's beam
A gorgeous star draws nigh;
And to thy door there cometh
The Wise-men from afar,
The Lord to see, and bow the knee
Where shines the Morning Star.

O cruel Cross on Calvary,
How dark thy shadows fall
Upon the green, where flowers were seen
Ere died the Lord of all;
But at thy foot there lieth,
Slain by the Son of God,
The serpent sin, which entered in
To Eden's fair abode.

By
Thomas Tiplady

O cottage home of Nazareth,
Where Mary guards her Son!
Around thy walls the sunlight falls
To bless the Holy One;
There summer longest lingers,
Her flowery path to trace,
And wild birds sing, and ivies cling,
About the sacred place.

O garden tomb, where angels watch
Beneath the silent moon!
'Mid roses pale, the nightingale
Her mellow song doth tune;
For when the morning waketh
The Lord of Life shall rise,
And on the earth flowers spring to birth
That bloomed in paradise.

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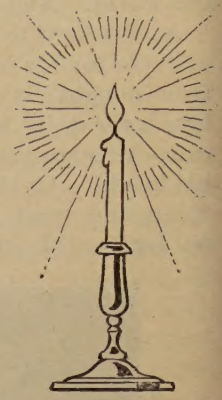
The Lad With the Light[1]

The Story of Joram, the Shepherd's Son

By A. Eugene Bartlett



To the Men of Good Will, who have followed the star, I dedicate this story of Joram, the shepherd's son, but not without a prayer that with each succeeding Christmas the Christ may be born again in all our hearts.

IF you have been to the little white town that lies still upon the hillside and in the valley of the ever-memorable land wherein our Saviour was born, then you will be glad to make the pilgrimage again to the very place where he was born.

Perhaps as yet you have not made the journey over seas and are counting months or money until that desired day shall come. Then may this story but urge you on toward the accomplishment of a worthy purpose. He who has been to Palestine has henceforth new clothing for the heavenly King; he has new and holier thoughts for the hour of prayer and a deeper insight into the mysteries of the Incarnation.

Henry van Dyke is doubtless right—there was another, a fourth wise man who also found him and was rewarded of him. Who shall deny that there was at the birth hour a lad who shared in certain of the experiences of that natal time? Is the picture of his birth quite complete without the child?

If you would inquire further concerning the purpose of the story, then I would say that yet there are some of the fashion of mind and life of Scrooge, and to conquer and win the very last one of such as he, is yet a worthy motive.

May Joram's story make Christmas still more a time of the child spirit that comes to abide in all hearts.

A. Eugene Bartlett.

"FATHER, may I take little Brown-Ear home to Zadoc?" It was Joram who was insisting that his father answer his question, but the shepherd, at first, paid no heed to the boy but shouted rather to his flock.

"Tahoo! Tahoo!" Then taking his sling he sent a smooth pebble whizzing after one of the sheep that was starting away from the flock.

Little wonder that the shepherd ignored the boy's question, for the day had been long and trying. It was mid December and the rain had not come and the fields about Bethlehem were dry and brown. There seemed scarce a tinge of living green left anywhere. The sheep had grown restless, searching for sweet grass nowhere to be found. The music of the little river in the valley below that had flowed all summer, no longer sent up to the flock its silvery notes. Hunger and thirst were preying upon the flocks.

Intently, day after day, Ariel, the shepherd, had studied the heavens, searching for a cloud, though it was no larger than a man's hand, that should be the promise of the former rain, for so the shepherds have called the late autumn rain since the days of Abraham, even until now. The wind still blew lazily from the south, hot and tiresome, telling endlessly of the stifling desert and bringing not one iota of the gladness of the gardens.

Brown-Ear was a three-days' old lamb, born out of season, and now weak and hungry and suffering with its mother for lack of fit pasturage. Its one brown ear had fastened it at once with a name, which it would always bear and by which the shepherds would one day call it, if it survived the days until the rain brought a little burst of green before the winter shut down.

"Well, take it home, if thou so desirest," finally answered the shepherd. "It may survive on goat's milk, when it would die here in the yellowed fields."

Joram, delighted, took the lamb up in his arms and started down the hill in the direction of the town of Bethlehem. Scanning once more the sky, his father shouted after him:

"If the rain should come, it will be hard. If it catcheth thee, thou canst crawl into the House of Chinham and rest awhile in the stables. After the first it will abate a little and thou mayest continue thy journey, and thy mother will have supper waiting for thee."

Down the haggard hillside Joram slowly walked, for even a lamb is a burden to a boy of ten. The boy thought the lamb's legs too long and much in the way; and the lamb reciprocated by thinking that the boy now hugged him too tight and now almost let him fall. The boy and the lamb talked about it, neither altogether understanding the other, and frequently it became necessary to stop and rest.

At Thamar's place the hill road joins the main road from the north and there Joram found many who were hurrying on toward Bethlehem. Some were on foot and some were riding donkeys but all were tired and dusty and anxious to be in Bethlehem, for the sky was clouding and it does not take long for the clouds to gather and break, when it is mid December.

Falling in with a lad, his own age, they shared the lamb that was growing heavier; and Joram learned the cause of the many travelers upon the road. A census was

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to be taken and each family was bound for its native city to be there enrolled.

Within a quarter hour the storm broke and lightning and thunder accompanied the downpour. A minute after it struck the road, the strange boy had decided that the company of his parents would be more satisfactory. He dropped the lamb unceremoniously into the arms of Joram and ran to his father and mother. The sun-baked road sent up little puffs of dust as though making a feeble resistance and then it yielded and in a few minutes more the road was a gully of rushing brown water. In less time than that Joram and the lamb were thoroughly wetted. The thin, one-piece garment of the boy did not withstand the rain, it did not even make the resistance that the road had made. As for the lamb, it may be that his wool coat served him better than Joram's light garment, but he shared the woes of the boy and bleated a little louder and with a sadder note.

Chinham's Inn was still a quarter of a mile away and only those who have been through the first torrential rain of late autumn know how wet and bedraggled was little Joram when he decided to press on for shelter. Nature moves suddenly in Palestine, and for that matter in most of the Orient, and this was the fore-running shower and ceased as suddenly as it had begun.

It was now past the sunset hour and night was coming on. Joram, wet to the skin, still hugging his wet lamb, trudged on down the soft, muddy road with a complacency he could not explain. He was wet, tired and, more important, it was past hungry-time, and yet he went on feeling happy and not understanding why he was not cross and impatient. He did not long think of his feelings, however, for he was a boy and long, hard thinking is not apt to be a boy's habit at ten. He fell rather to watching the oncoming night.

Was it that never before he had been really mindful of the soft, luminous beauty of a star-lit night; or was this particular night a wondrous night such as had never been before? He was inclined to believe this was such a night, at least, as he had never seen before. He felt a something, awesome, strange within him. He found himself repeating words of the Law that his father had taught him, as he patted his lamb to keep it quiet and to keep those long, ungainly legs out of his face. He began to remember what his uncle once had told him about the coming of the Messiah. It was to be on a night of wonderful beauty and a great star was to be in the heavens, hung like a lamp in the dark of the sky.

The crowd was again moving down the road with him, for they had been stopped by the shower, even as he had been; but they were quieter now and did not brush him aside and push him off the road as they had done before the shower.

A kindly woman's voice bade him look up. "See the stars, lad! Were they ever so beautiful as they are tonight? Where is thy mother? Such a night as this you should be home with her. See the golden star that shines brighter than all the rest! They say that one Balthazar, who lives in Babylon, has foretold the coming of a new star and with the star the birth of the Messiah for whom we have prayed.

"But thou art only a lad and knowest not how we have groaned and prayed for his coming. When he is come, the Romans will no longer put burdens on our poor backs. We shall be free and we shall rise with him and reign with him! But though thou understandest not, lad, watch yonder star, for thou hast not seen a star like that!"

Then Joram looked as he had not looked before and it did seem that the skies were higher, higher than the arch of the Temple, higher than ever he or any great one could ever reach. There were multitudes of silver stars and there was one of gold, and so beautiful was it that he could hardly take his eyes from it. When he did look on down the road he could see the lesser, twinkling lights of Bethlehem. Soon he came to the Inn, but a crowd was without and a harsh voice told him the news:

"There's no room! It was full before sunset. Every leewan is occupied."

Joram remembered his father's advice and, tired with his journey, he decided to rest a little before he crossed the town and went home. His father had said, crawl in, and that is what Joram did. He edged in and out and under the crowd until he was in the midst of the Inn, but the place was full, so full that not even could one small boy find a convenient place for himself and his lively baggage. He knew the Inn by another name than that which his father had given it. To him and to his boy friends it was the House of Caves. In times when there were few travelers and there were no feast days in progress, he and Zerah had come here, sometimes, to play in one of the caves and had driven the Romans out of Jerusalem with so much noise that the inn-keeper had finally ordered the boys off. He well knew that the Inn had adjoining rooms hollowed out of the limestone cliffs that were used for the donkeys and the sheep and sometimes a traveler arriving when the Inn was full slept in these underground rooms.

He made his way out to one of the caves, and he was not at first sure whether or not it was occupied, for there was but one little lamp and that was nearly gone out. It gave a dying flare and then left the room in darkness, but in the beam of light his own mother had seen her boy Joram.

"I am glad that thou art safe. I had left thy brother and had come out to meet thee, for thou hadst never stayed so late with thy father before. The storm came and I entered here and found a woman in sore need and I have been doing those things that one woman may do for another in her hour of pain. Run now and find the keeper of the Inn and fetch back a lamp burning brightly. Come now, run, for we have need of the lamp."

"But, mother," Joram's tone suggested both argument and delay, "I have with me a new lamb for Zadoc and I must watch him."

"Drop it here on the other side of me, and run on as I have bidden thee," and his mother banished his objections and the lad started for lamp and oil.

Coming back a little later with a lamp he held it high, and as he came into the cave a strange and unexpected sight met his eyes. There in the corner upon a bed of straw lay a woman and a baby and beside her was a man with head bent down watching the mother and the child, while on the other side was his own mother and, beyond, the lamb he had brought.

Joram was but ten and not the child of a rabbi, only the son of a shepherd, but, like every Hebrew boy, he had heard of the coming of the Messiah, and this very night the woman in the crowd had pointed him to the wonder of the night and the glory of the star. He passed the little

terra cotta lamp to his mother and dropped to his knees and gazed into the faces of the baby and his mother.

Joram did not understand all he saw. It may be his mother shared with Joram his feelings of awe and mystery and confessed in her soul that there was much that she did not understand.

As one hushed by a great joy and a great pain that come together, Mary, the mother, lay motionless upon her bed of straw and the light from the lamp the lad had brought seemed to kindle the light in her eyes. It was a light like that of the golden star that had appeared brighter than the others and yet the light in her eyes did not stand still as did the star, but seemed to travel out and on. His mother knew that Mary was seeing beyond them, beyond the cave, beyond Bethlehem. She was looking down the years! Perhaps already she saw the shadow of the cross. It may be at the natal hour God drew for once the curtain and showed to this chosen mother the triumphant course of the Messiah, and henceforth she was to ponder that vision all through her life.

It was Joram, jumping now to his feet, who broke the meditations of the little group. "Mother, I must give something to him!" The first lad to see the new-born Christ felt the impulse that many others have felt at seeing him!

His mother moved the lamp a little that its light might fall on the boy. His faded blue robe hung limp with rain and mud. His face was grimy with the dirt his hands had carried from the lamb to his wet head. His bare legs showed brown and moist from beneath the robe. He was a dejected, bedraggled little boy. His mother thought of purple and fine linen, of spices and perfume, of frankincense and gold and her boy had none of these.

"Thou hast nothing for him," spoke his mother, sadly, for her wish had kept pace with his. "The child is well bound and needs not even thy faded robe."

Joram's face kindled with a new idea and no sooner did it flash upon him than he burst out—

"He shall have my lamb! I will give him Brown-Ear."

Sure that his gift would be acceptable, the boy knelt over the lamb, now fast asleep, and taking his own robe he wiped the mud and water from its coat and strove as best he could to make his gift presentable.

Then lifting it up he carried it and laid it gently down beside the sleeping child. Then Mary, the mother, turned slightly and smiled and said: "Thank thee."

Joram's mother told many a time through the years that the first word Mary spoke was that one word of gratitude.

Twice Joram went to fill the lamp and so the night went on. Meanwhile, upon the hill beyond the town, Joram's father and the other shepherds watched their flocks, and they, too, saw the star, and, more, they heard the celestial choirs. Their voices were attuned to the finer harmonies of the night and they could hear when some that night were deaf to all that glorious music.

Longings, human and divine, surged through Ariel's soul that night as he watched his flock. There was a human tug at his heart because of his son. The storm had been heavy and he wanted intensely to know whether the boy had reached home safely, or was he asleep at Chinham's Inn, caught and held there by the storm. The divine urge came from the star and the chiming voices. Faith told him that this was the night foretold by all the Hebrew prophets, and doubt, with a kind of Satanic cunning, suggested that he was dreaming, that all he needed was more of sleep, that in the morning it would be as it had always been.

Ariel took his pastoral pipe and blew upon it, blew the call that shepherds make when they find a robber among the flock and need help; and in answer two shepherds came from the adjoining hills and the three discussed in hushed tones the strange star and the chiming voices.

It was still dark but not far from the breaking of the day when they reached the wise decision to go down the hill and to Chinham's Inn and see if the boy was there and if the travelers had seen what they had seen and heard what they had heard.

When they reached the Inn, they woke the keeper, and none too pleasantly and half asleep he answered their question.

"Yes, there was a child born tonight. They are out there in the khan to the left. There is no more oil, but the dawn is at hand and by the light of day you will find the mother and the child."

The light was coming fast now and without a word they went past the leewans and across the yard and into the left khan, and there, bathed in the first gray light of the morning, they found Mary, the mother, the sleeping child and the little lamb. Just behind was Ariel's wife and beyond Mary sat Joseph, heavy with sleep and dozing where he sat.

These shepherds knew and needed no further word of confirmation. If they had doubted, their doubts were banished now by the affirmations of their hearts. Empty-handed they had come, but they dropped to their knees and left the offerings of grateful hearts.

Ariel knew that now the night was over other hands would come to minister to Mary. Beckoning to his wife and taking the lad by the hand, they quietly left the khan and were shortly out upon the road that turned toward home. The day shepherd would take Ariel's place and he would spend the time in sleep, but not yet, for sleep seemed far away, so wonderful and strange were the events of the night.

The peace of the night lingered and the morning matched the night in its beauty. Now little Joram failed to note the beauty of the morning, for sleep was getting the better of him. His father took him up, sizable boy that he was, and carried him the rest of the way. When they reached home they laid him down, still asleep, and his arms groped about for something.

"He is reaching for Brown-Ear," his father said. "He'll miss the lamb."

"Yes," said his mother, "but Hillel said, 'Only he who has made a great sacrifice can find a great happiness.' It may be that our gifts have been too small to find a real joy."

Ariel said nothing, but looked down on the boy with the look that is good to see in the eyes of a father.

Then the mother added: "His was the very first gift."

It was not for ten days that the Wise-men came with their gold, frankincense and myrrh. The perfumes Mary kept, and some say that she used them to anoint his body at the grave. The gold Joseph used for the journey into Egypt. But the first gift was not without its value and made its contribution to the home at Nazareth, for the lamb played with the boy, Jesus, in the yard back of the carpenter's shop, and it was from the fleece of Joram's lamb that Mary made her son's first coat.

Discovering God

By Margaret Slattery

EVERY discoverer since time began has been moved by deep longings and intense desires that, like mighty generators, were constantly creating within his soul forces that drove him out into the unknown, there to search until he found—or died, whispering words of hope that the gates of truth would be opened to him and he should find the thing he sought.

When there is no hunger there is no search for food. All the food of all the earth, from the simplest meal of the humblest dweller in the jungle to the most complex food product that finds its way to the dweller in the huge apartments of great modern cities, has come into existence in answer to the search of man for something to gratify his physical hunger.

When there is no mental hunger, no intense desire, demanding, insisting, appealing, then the mind makes no discoveries. There is no driving force to send it out upon the quest. When satisfaction paralyzes and benumbs the human spirit the generators cease their work, spiritual forces lie inert and dormant, and no discoverer, his heart on fire with the passion to find, leaves a peaceful harbor for a search upon the storm-tossed seas for something hidden in the fog—unknown.

When the road into unknown realms is devoid of pilgrims searching in the daytime, searching in the night, life loses its zest and its glory.

In his search for food man has learned much and has much more to learn. Unless he discovers how to feed regularly and adequately the vast millions upon the earth, longing, toiling, clamoring for food, dying for want of it, then one terrible day hunger will devour civilization.

In his search for knowledge man has discovered much, and vast inconceivable stretches of truth wait for him just ahead, calling him, challenging him. An eighteen-year-old boy who has just completed his radio outfit asked me to look at it this afternoon. Last night he used it and it worked. Not for a long time shall I forget the thrill of triumph in his voice as he said, "I made every bit of it myself. You can hear the voices as plainly as if the singers were right over there. You shall hear a concert tonight. Just think, we could have used this radio a thousand years ago if we had only known enough! It seems as if men were awfully slow."

"I wonder what else there is out there in the sky, in the clouds, in the air," I said, "what other wonderful thing waits for us."

"Nobody knows," he answered. Then very soberly—"That is why I am going to college. Thought at first I wouldn't. But I've got to learn. I—I would like to discover something." The driving power of intense desire shone in his eyes and transformed the lines of careless youth upon his fresh young face into lines of determination—the determination of the mentally hungry.

Youth is possessed by the hungry mind. No one can doubt it today as he sees the mighty army besieging the colleges, universities, institutions of learning all over our country. Twenty thousand five hundred full-time students in the University of California alone and a long list of universities whose enrollment is ten thousand and over—yet all who wish to enter may not. Not only in America but all over the world the hungry mind is driving youth out upon the quest. In Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Bohemia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, youths who have looked upon plague, famine and death are knocking at the doors of knowledge demanding admittance, insisting upon being taught. Japan, China, India crowd the colleges of government and mission stations crying that they will not be turned aside.

"Art thou hungry, O my spirit, burdened with the pain of selfish greed that grips the world, restless under the limitations of dogma made by man, lonely in the presence of the crowd that sees but the present moment with its promise of pleasure and its gift of gold? Art thou unsatisfied—longing for God, desiring to know him with an intensity that drives thee to push aside the lesser things and give thyself to the search? Or art thou complacent, satisfied, content with words and phrases, paralyzed by habits of thought that make thinking on old lines an easy task, thinking in new terms so difficult that thou seekest no more of God than that thou hast? Art thou well content and, conscious of no deep need, art undisturbed by the need of thy fellows?"

Encouraging above all else perhaps to those who look forward to a new day is the hunger of the adult mind. We see it in the almost unbelievable registration of students in summer schools and classes—twelve thousand—a whole city—in Columbia, and every other institution which has opened its doors has broken all previous records in enrollment. More significant than all else is the registration at conferences and summer schools of those engaged in volunteer work without pay—teachers of religion, Scout leaders, settlement directors, public welfare servants—all seriously at work in classroom and lecture hall, paying tuition, board, traveling expenses, driven to the quest of what to teach and how to teach it by the power which deep longing and intense desire for knowledge have generated.

This quest for knowledge on the part of the great majority, both of youth and adults, lacks as yet the passion to discover. It is content to take. It is being taught. It has not launched out for itself. It is following the blazed trail, not making it. But the day of adventure is near. The restlessness and "divine discontent" grow more evident. Questions, doubts, agonies of mind as attempts are made to solve earth's complex problems will drive youth out into the darkness of error to bring back some rays from the light of truth, even as in the past when Galileo, doubting old theories, looked up at the stars with questioning eyes and discovered a universe; as Columbus, confused and perplexed, gazed out upon the sea, questioned it and found a new continent. All thoughtful souls, looking out upon the world as it is

today, will bid youth Godspeed as it asks questions and seeks their answer.

But deeply as we are stirred by the hunger of mind that will drive men to the discovery of knowledge, we are even more deeply concerned with the hunger of the spirit. There are those who believe that man today is hungry only for that which will strengthen his body and satisfy his mind. But no one who lives close to human life can believe this. He knows that man's spirit has suffered more than either body or mind in the years since nineteen hundred and fourteen. Something happened to comfortable concepts of God and religion, accepted as taught and thought little about, something happened to man's exclusive heaven, to his dogma, to his empty words when he stood face to face with death—nauseating, horrible, pitiless death—senseless slaughter, as one stricken young soul expressed it. Something happened to the phrase *God is love* as it lay in his memory since the years when, as a little child, he had been taught to say it in the church. Something happened to the words "Our Father," words which he had never even thought about as they fell from his lips in the service in happy days at home. Something happened to him when he saw the tiny child victim of war dead and dying, the nameless agonies of women and girls caught in the whirlwind of hate. These things "*stabbed* his spirit broad awake" and left him in despair, hungry for God, for the consciousness of his *reality,* for assurance of his love.

When youth came back to take up life as it had been, he came with deep longing, intense desire, and we, not sharing his experience, did not realize his great need. We tried to say the old words in the old way, not knowing that for him they had lost their comforting familiarity and in the presence of the deluge of agony he had witnessed and shared seemed meaningless and weak. Not hungry ourselves, with no new and deeper longings in our souls, without intense consuming desire to know whether or not God *is,* we could not understand his unbelief, his doubt, his perplexity, bitterness or utter indifference. For our failure to understand the forces generated by his longings and desires, for our failure to challenge him to go out into the darkness that had fallen upon the earth and rediscover God, may we be forgiven! We did not share his passion. Our spirits did not hunger. They were benumbed by content, satisfied with form, calmed by phrases. We were not hungry. We were without new and deeper longings; no intense desires drove us out upon the quest for more truth, for clearer vision of our God. But the moment when we might have sent him forth is past. The great question is, "Are our spirits hungry *now?*" Are *you* who will next Sunday—because mental hunger drove you to search for knowledge—teach a far better lesson than you did a year ago, who because you know your child, your youth, will be able to meet needs as you never could have done a year ago—are you hungry in *spirit?* Does your soul thirst after God? Are you *searching for him?*

It was hunger of spirit that sent Abraham out into the unknown deserts after God. The other men of his tribe were content with the gods they had, the gods handed down to them, the gods of the past—they discovered nothing of God. It was hunger of spirit that drove Isaiah to the discovery of God's forgiving mercy until, conscious of *"sins like scarlet made as wool, red like crimson made as white as snow,"* he had a new vision of God. It was the abandon of remorse and shame of David's defeated soul, burning with longing and intense desire for God, that gave to him and to us the vision that shines from the penitent yet triumphant psalms. It was hunger of spirit that kept the disciples following Jesus, though he gave them no shelter, promised them no earthly power or advantage. It was spiritual longing, intense desire that generated the power which drove them on from Calvary to share in his cross, his suffering, and his triumph. It is hunger of soul that has written the story of the developing church. Spiritual hunger gave us Paul, Polycarp, Savonarola, Augustine, St. Francis, Luther and the mystics; gave us Matheson, Drummond, Moody; gave us the best we have in art, gave us the greatest and most lasting of the poems of Browning and Tennyson. Hunger of spirit has kept aglow the flame of idealism in the darkest hours of man's history. There is spiritual hunger in the world today. *It will save us.* One finds it in Japan, one sees it in China, one looks upon it in Sundai Singh and Mahatma Gandhi, one sees it in the doubting, seeking face of the Mohammedan student, and, thank God, one finds it moving through the masses of the church, self-satisfied, dumb and blind though they have often been, disturbing them, leaving them discontented and restless until here and there one hungering for more of God turns back to Jesus Christ and hears him say, "Look past the creeds, over the ecclesiasticism, beyond the dogma, look at *me* and see God, for 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'"

It may be that you are one who has gone back to him and in the glory of his simplicity found God anew, in the mighty challenge of his two great commandments found the call to your own soul. If you are not one of these, you must join the growing company seeking the God man must find, else lose all he holds most dear. You *must* join them, for only the hungry spirit can generate the power that will fire the heart of youth. I know you are studying—that you are giving time and energy to the preparation of lesson material, to the increase of class membership, to regularity of attendance, to the building up of high standards of work and character. I know you are doing these things at great cost to yourself, and it is splendid of you. It is not enough. Unless you are on the quest for God, unless your soul hungers for a deeper consciousness of his presence in the world—a vital living power which you may reach and share—unless your deep longing impels you to think about him and to speak to him not from habit, or sense of fitness or duty but because of intense desire to know him, then you cannot blaze the trail for these young spirits looking each week to you for guidance. One who has not discovered truth for himself finds it difficult to awaken the passion for discovery in the souls of others. One must turn to his own soul and in honest sincerity question it. "Art thou hungry, O my spirit, burdened with the pain of selfish greed that grips the world, restless under the limitations of dogma made by man, lonely in the presence of the crowd that sees but the present moment with its promise of pleasure and its gift of gold? Art thou unsatisfied—longing for God, desiring to know him with an intensity that drives thee to push aside the lesser things and give thyself to the search? Or art thou complacent, satisfied, content with words and phrases, paralyzed by habits of thought that make thinking on old lines an easy task, thinking in new

(Continued on page 144)

Holy Night

An Interpretation of the Christmas Hymn by Joseph Mohr

By Daniel Sommer Robinson

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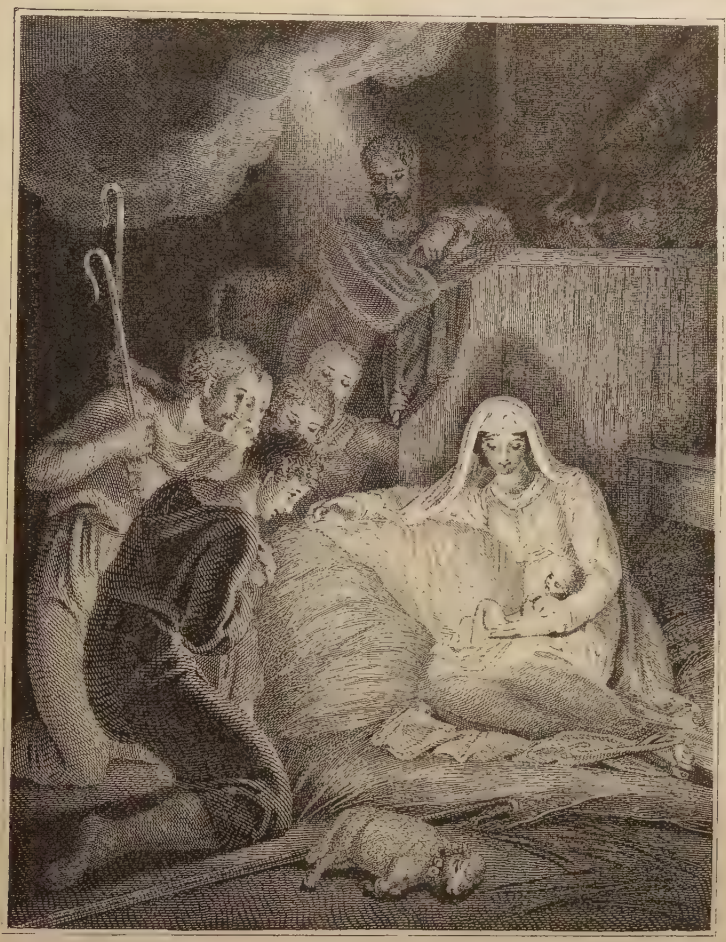

Drawn by R. Westall R.A. Engraved by Chas. Heath.

The Adoration of the Shepherds.

And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a Manger

HOLY night! peaceful night!
All is dark, save the light
Yonder where they sweet vigils keep
O'er the Babe, who in silent sleep,
Rests in heavenly peace,
Rests in heavenly peace.

Silent night! holy night!
Darkness flies, all is light;
Shepherds hear the angels sing:
"Alleluia! hail the King!
Jesus the Saviour is here,
Jesus the Saviour is here."

Holy night! peaceful night!
Child of heaven, oh, how bright
Thou didst smile on us when thou wast born;
Blest indeed was that happy morn;
Full of heavenly joy,
Full of heavenly joy.

WHAT is the spirit of Christmas? That it is eternally real no one can doubt who has passed through the days of bleak December in a well-developed Christian community. At the very beginning of the month it begins to awaken to newness of life, and ere the dawn of the sacred day even every hardened Scrooge has had feelings of kindness and generosity stirred within him by its marvelously potent influence. The Christmas spirit is an unseen and an invisible, yet a real and intelligent consciousness, which has through centuries past and will through centuries to come, express itself in noble aspirations and generous deeds, as well as in an exquisite literature of carol and hymn, poetry and story, essay and sermon. Mysterious spirit, how unfathomable are thy depths and thy ways past finding out!

Nowhere, I think, does this immanent, indwelling spirit of Christmas come to finer expression than in the wonderful hymn *Holy Night*. It is now more than a hundred years since a young Catholic priest gave to the world its precious words. Joseph Mohr, assistant to the reverend father in charge of the parish at Laufen in Salzburg, Austria, was moved by the Yule-tide spirit to write a new song for the Christmas celebration of his own church for the year eighteen hundred and eighteen. In the neighboring village of Arnsdorf dwelt his young friend, Franz Gruber, then an humble schoolmaster, but later one of the great church organists of his generation. It was this musician who set the lines of Joseph Mohr to the music by which they are still sung throughout Christendom. What joy there must have been, what ethereal rejoicing among the heavenly host when first this music was lifted skyward by human voices!

No wonder such a hymn soon went far beyond its native place. No wonder it has become one of our best loved Christmas songs. For implicit in it is a universal meaning the fullness of which even its author, when he first penned the words, may not have comprehended. Indeed, part of its value for English-speaking people depends upon the choice of words made by the translator. But

what does that matter? The value of any hymn to the individual is largely measured by the extent to which he is capable of interpreting it into his own experience. Every hymn has for each one of us as much significance as our own insight is able to find in it, and no more. Only to those whose experiences have been rich and varied enough to enable them to penetrate beneath the outer symbol to the hidden truth which that symbol enshrines does the deepest meaning of any hymn or poem come. Guided by this thought let us consider the meaning of the English translation of the verses of *Holy Night.*

Why is it that such words, when sung to the sweet music of Franz Gruber, express, better perhaps than any other hymn ever written in celebration of the nativity, the inmost essence of the Christmas consciousness? I think the answer is that we have just the necessary harmony of ideas and tones to awaken that mysterious sentiment of joy suffused with sorrow which characterizes the genuine Christmas spirit. For although Christmas is rightly regarded as the most joyful season of the year, yet to the thoughtful its joy is a kind of holy joy—a joy which is the transmutation of sorrow and which retains within itself something of the nature of sorrow. The cross casts its shadow before. Mingled with the happiness over the anniversary of the Saviour's birth is the sadness which comes from the knowledge of the manner of his death. And in this beautiful hymn these two sentiments are so harmoniously merged, so indissolubly fused together by tender notes of music, that the religious emotion appropriate to the Christmas season is naturally and readily kindled in all who take an appreciative attitude toward what they hear. How well this comes out, for instance, in the words *all is dark* joined with *save the light yonder!* It is as though all the light there is in this dark world came from another world yonder, where sweet vigils are being kept over the Christ-child. And yet the world over yonder is not really separate from this world because we can see its light. Yes, and we can hear its alleluia refrain, "Jesus the Saviour is here!" No wonder the darkness flies, for the yonder is really here. The two worlds are fundamentally one. This is the eternal significance of the birth of Jesus Christ.

In the thought of Christians the Christ-child is not a child which once was and now is no more. Indeed there is a sense in which the exact opposite is true. Beautiful beyond compare are many of the legends of the Christ-child which have come down to us. But their beauty depends upon an eternal truth which lies buried below the surface. For beauty does not dwell so far away from truth that what contains absolutely no truth can still be beautiful. What then is this kernel of truth at the heart of these legends, if it be not that the ideal Christ who is with the Father retains within his sovereign personality the unique and eternally real qualities of childhood? In this sense the Christ-child now is and forever will be. Hence for the Christian the words of *Holy Night* mean much more than the obvious reference to the historical fact of the birth of Jesus. To him that Jesus, who taught that any one who would enter into the kingdom of heaven must become as a little child, still retains and embodies within himself those imperishable attributes which constitute an ideal child. In this sense Jesus may still appear to Christians as a little child or under the aspect of childhood. This is the rich meaning of belief in an actually real Christ-child who transcends and who is exalted above the whole realm of time and space and who has never nor shall ever pass away. Does not giving *Holy Night* this philosophical interpretation offer a genuine explanation of its strong hold upon Christians?

And to all sorrowing parents, although it does not come to expression, there is still another most comforting idea latent in the thought of this hymn. Their babe is yonder with the Christ-child! If all is dark here, even through this darkness there gleams the light which tells that sweet vigils are being kept in the nursery of heaven over their child. Upon all sorrowing parents who grasp this thought there will dawn, like a heavenly vision, the realization that all is well with the child who has gone from them. It, too, rests in heavenly peace! Dominated by this realization, even while in the midst of sorrow, they will be filled with heavenly joy.

Yes, this hymn has two meanings, an obvious one for all, but a deeper, profounder one for those who have been taught by sorrow to penetrate beyond the veil. We do not rob but rather greatly enrich the Christian conception of Jesus when we think of him still as a little child, the constant companion of the myriads of departed children. It is true that here we talk in a figure, for we speak of the spiritual world. Nevertheless Francis Thompson showed keen and penetrating religious insight when he put into the mouth of a little child, whom he represents as praying to Jesus, words like these:

"Thou canst not have forgotten all
That it feels like to be small:
And thou knowst I cannot pray
To thee in my father's way—
When thou wast so little, say,
Couldst thou talk thy father's way?

"So a little Child come down
And hear a child's tongue like thine own;
Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk.
To thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, thou art so fair),
And say: 'O Father, I, thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one!'"

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." These are Jesus' own words and it is well for us to be reminded that they have an eternal as well as a temporal significance.

When again the Yule-tide spirit steals upon you, wrapping you in its holy arms and drawing you near some glowing fireside or candle-lighted Christmas-tree or hallowed altar of worship, let the poetry and music of *Holy Night,* welling up from the depths of an understanding heart, be your song of welcome. Then whatever may have been your lot since last you joined in singing hymns of the nativity, Christmas Eve will be for you a holy night, a peaceful night, full of heavenly joy. For with the clear and tearless eyes of the soul you will look upon the Child of heaven and behold the radiant brightness of his smile.

The Call of the Christ-Child

Christmas Tableaux

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The following program was given by the Junior Department of Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, Philadelphia. The tableaux may be easily reproduced by any school. Well-known paintings will serve as a guide for costumes and settings for Part One. The Notes on the Scenes contain suggestions which will help in planning the tableaux for Part Two and Part Three.

Part One

THE CALL AND RESPONSE OF MARY
The Annunciation. Luke 1:26-33.
Instrumental music: *Pastoral Symphony.*
The Holy Family. Luke 2:1-7.
Choir: *There's a song in the air.*

THE CALL AND RESPONSE OF THE SHEPHERDS
There were shepherds abiding in the field. Luke 2:8-14.
Choir: *It came upon the midnight clear.*
They found the babe lying in a manger. Luke 2:15-20.
Choir: *Silent Night.*

THE CALL AND RESPONSE OF THE WISE-MEN
The Star in the East. Matt. 2:1-6.
Choir: *Brightest and best of the sons of the morning.*
They offered unto him gifts. Matt. 2:7-11.
Choir: *We three kings of Orient are.*

Part Two

THE CALL AND RESPONSE OF A MODERN MARY
The hour of prayer.
Choir: *Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult.*
The Deaconess.
Choir: *Where cross the crowded ways of life.*

THE CALL & RESPONSE OF THE MODERN SHEPHERDS
A Misson Study Class in the JUNIOR DEPARTMENT.
Choir: *O Zion, haste!*
The Mass Movement in India.
Choir: *Fling out the banner.*

THE CALL AND RESPONSE OF THE MODERN WISE-MEN
The Clinic.
Reading: *Be strong!* By Maltbie D. Babcock.
The Doctor.
Choir: *Who is thy neighbor?*

Part Three

THE CALL OF THE CHRIST-CHILD AND OUR RESPONSE
Unto every nation and tribe and people! Rev. 14:6.
Choir: *O little town of Bethlehem.*
And I saw a great white throne! Rev. 20:11.
Choir and Congregation: *O come, let us adore him!*
And he shall reign for ever and ever. Rev. 11:15.
Choir, Congregation and Orchestra: *All hail the power of Jesus' name!* Miles Lane.

Notes on the Scenes in the Tableaux

Part One These scenes depict the historic Christmas, the Call and response of the earliest followers of the Christ-child.

Part Two Here an attempt is made to show a counterpart of the historic Christmas in the call and response of certain present-day followers of the Christ. ¶ A young woman whose life has been wholly given to the pursuit of pleasure, hears the Call while kneeling in a fashionable church. Her response is seen in the following scene, where she has become a deaconess and is giving her life in passionate devotion to the work of bringing the Christ-child into the starved lives of the mothers and children of the city's slums. ¶ The modern shepherds are a group of boys in a church-school class studying the wonderful story of the mission fields. In the next scene one of the boys has become a missionary in India, the incident portrayed being an actual one many times repeated in the amazing "Mass Movement" toward Christianity in that land so long barred against the Light. A whole village is begging that a missionary be sent to baptize those who have already heard the call of the Christ. They offer to pay for the support of a teacher out of their own meager funds, but the missionary sadly shakes his head. Hundreds of other villages are begging just as earnestly for help. The prayer of the church at one time was for an open door in India, now it is for trained workers in sufficient numbers to cope with the flood of seekers for the Light. ¶ The closing scenes show a group of young medical students who, too, have heard the call of the Christ, the Divine Healer. In the following scene one of them has become a physician ministering in the homes of the people. Here the agonized parents hover around the sick bed of their child, waiting for the doctor's word of encouragement or despair. These two scenes are suggestions from the two well-known paintings, *The Clinic*, by Rembrandt and *The Doctor*, by a modern painter.

Part Three Here is presented one more opportunity for us all to hear and respond to the Call. The followers of the Christ-child in all ages and from all lands gather again at the manger, while the choir sings softly in the distance, *O little town of Bethlehem.* From north and south, from east and west, they come.

"In Christ there is no East nor West,
In Him no South nor North,
But one great Fellowship of Love
Throughout the whole wide earth."

¶ The music swells in volume and at the bidding of the Herald the whole audience rises and joins with the choir in the old Latin hymn *Adeste Fideles, O come, let us adore him!* Finally, the Herald proclaims the words of St. John's prophecy, "The kingdoms of this world have become the KINGDOM of our Lord and of the Christ!" The audience, the choir and the orchestra join in a final burst of song, *All hail the power of Jesus' name!*

Immanuel—A Christmas Meditation

By A. D. Belden

IT is curious that this beautiful name is so little used for Jesus. Doubtless it is because the word is never directly applied to him in Scripture. It is a word of prophecy originally used by Isaiah concerning the coming Deliverer of Israel, whose identity is not clearly indicated. Isaiah, like every real prophet, spoke greater things than he realized and his glowing picture of Immanuel, the Divine Deliverer, is only adequately filled out by Jesus seven hundred years after the prophet's vision. Upon the prophet's lips this word signified all the hunger of human souls for the discovery of God, not in some far distant heaven, but in the midst of human affairs. Christmas is God's splendid answer to that hunger.

The meaning of "Immanuel" is "God with us," the first part of the word being familiar to us in the term "immanent." No phrase could better express the essential meaning of Christmas. The Incarnation of God in Christ was the great point of transition in the history of the world, at which the unseen God, previously so dimly felt and imperfectly understood, became visible and tangible in the midst of time and sense. The distant God of current religious thought and feeling became the God of whom the apostles were at last able to declare, "That which was from the beginning, which we have listened to, which we have seen with our own eyes, and our own hands have handled, the life of the ages which was with the Father and was manifested to us."

The Highest in the Lowest

The first Christmas was the occasion when the idea of God as being apart from and different from our common humanity was superseded by the *fact* of God sharing our humanity and revealing his character in terms of our own life. The medium chosen by God for his great self-revelation was the medium of our own nature. The beautiful stories that have gathered about the birth of Jesus are all laden with this great fact. Their theme is the condescension of the great to the humble. Angels are linked to shepherds, the great and wise of the earth to a little lowly Babe; the Eternal Son of God is born of working-class folk; the favorite Son of heaven finds no better shelter on earth than the stable of an inn; the mightiest revelation in the spiritual history of mankind transpires in an obscure little outlying province of the empire. The quiet and humble and despised ones of the earth are caught up to the chief places in the vast drama of redemption—that drama which is as wide as the universe, as high as heaven, as deep as hell. And when this little Babe, so feeble and lowly in his advent, but so majestic in his real being, became consciously the teacher of men, it was the same great truth that he taught. Religion was not to be realized, God was not to be found by escaping from humanity, by despising its everyday experiences, by discarding the real world of fact for some mood of exalted emotion. Instead, the commonest service rendered in love was real contact with God. Only in the highest possibilities of human relationship was God to be found among men. "If a man keep my commandments we will come unto him and we will make our abode with him."

No "Bump" for Religion

There is somewhere a quaint poem in which the author depicts a parish priest so eager to find God that he hastened away from the common crowd and climbed the belfry of his church till he reached the top of the steeple, and there in longing he cried, "Where art thou, Lord?" only to be met by the startling reply, "Down here amongst my people!" That is the lesson of Christmas—Christ is Immanuel—God with *us*. The religion of Christ's day had made God a stranger. It had hidden him, like every religion whose ceremonial is greatly developed, behind an elaborate program of approach and a formidable array of minute moralities.

There are people, and their number is legion these days, who are fond of saying that they have no "religious bump." They will say it apologetically, but one can detect a subtle element of relief in their tones, as though they were not altogether sorry to be free of the responsibility involved in such a "bump." Such a condition, however, is no disqualification, but rather a supreme advantage, if they desire to be Christian, for it is of the very essence of Christ's revelation, that it is not in great knowledge, nor in many talents, nor in place and power, but in simple everyday life that the human heart enshrines God and all the host of heaven. "Whosoever receiveth a little child in my name, receiveth me."

Making Room for God

Is your life like that inn at Bethlehem, so full of others that there is no room for him? May that not be because you do not recognize him? You have been expecting some Great One! You thought he was incompatible with others! You thought of him as belonging to the stars and suns, but he belongs much more to the sweet reunions of loving hearts, to the faithful remembrance of humble souls, to Christmas gifts and Christmas cheer. "Nevermore thou needest seek me," he saith. "Raise the stone and thou shalt find me, cleave the wood, and I am there." Or as one of our poets has put it—

"I come in the little things," saith the Lord.
"My starry wings I do forsake,
Love's highway of humanity to take.
Meekly I fit my stature to your need.
In beggar's part
About your gates I shall not cease to plead
As man, to speak with man,
Till by such art
I shall achieve my immemorial plan,
Pass the low lintel of the human heart."

And if God so comes in Christ, it is that he may so come in and through you and me. Christ desires to be but the first-born of many brethren.

We Know Him

A delightful story has recently been received in missionary circles from China. A white colporteur visited a section of Central China into which no white missionary, to his knowledge, had ever penetrated. Gathering a big crowd of Chinese around him in a certain town, he began to read to them from the New Testament in Chinese. He read the story of Jesus healing a blind man, healing a lame man, healing lepers, like the lepers that crowded their streets, disfigured and dreadful. And they said suddenly, their faces lighting up: "Oh, we know him! He used to live here. Our mothers and fathers have told us about him. He lived in a house down the street. We know where he is buried. His grave is here. We will show it to you, teacher. When the great plague came, the rest left us, but he would not leave us. He gave us strange things out of a bottle. We took the things, and were better. We had babies. They were blind. He washed their eyes, he made them well; they could see. Oh, we know him very well! He has often walked down our streets and spoken to us when we were little." The colporteur said, "No, that could not be! He lived in a land far, far from here. He belonged to a different nationality."

"No, sir," they said, "you are mistaken. He was right here. Come, and we will show you the grave." He went and saw the grave, and its inscription in English. He looked up the history of the town, and found the man they were speaking of was a British volunteer, a young medical man, who had just completed his medical course, who had gone up the Yangtse six hundred miles, and broken into the central and northerly interior, and settled down in this little town. The plague at last had taken his life. And away out there, after the years, when they heard the words about Christ they called out, "We knew him! He lived here. We knew him well!" Thus, as his Father was known in him, does Christ desire to be known in us.

That charming poetess, Alice Meynell, in one of her poems, *The Unknown God,* presents us with a man who suddenly realizes, as a fellow-worshiper beside him takes the Holy Sacrament, that here is Christ present in his brother man. He straightway calls upon Christ *there,* crying urgently:

"I do confess thee here,
Alive within this life; I know thee near
Within this lonely conscience, closed away
Within this brother's solitary day.
Christ in his unknown heart,
His intellect unknown . . . look upon me!
Christ in his numbered breath,
Christ in his beating heart, and in his death,
Christ in his mystery! From that secret place
And from that separate dwelling, give me grace!"

Christ for him had become "Immanuel"—"God with us."

What if there is no other way for God to come into the human situation with really effective redemption? Will you wait for the wonderful and the miraculous and the spectacular to happen while missing this supreme wonder, this stupendous miracle, this spectacle so exquisitely tempered to our sight—Immanuel—"God with you in Christ"? Power in itself never appeals to our hearts so much as when it stoops to be gentle, proving itself in restraint rather than in ebullition. Just as mercy "becomes the thronèd monarch better than his crown," so is God's Divinity perfected in the likeness of our humanity. And in this way religion becomes possible for the humblest. You, the ordinary man may, like Enoch, "walk with God" and all your life—that humdrum life, that life of which you have been growing so tired, because it is so ordinary—become radiant and beautiful with the "light that never was on land or sea," with the Presence who links all worlds and all souls to one another in a Divine Commonwealth.

Artist, Murillo *The Angels' Kitchen*

In the Louvre, at Paris, there is a great painting by Murillo. The scene is a kitchen in which toilers move to and fro. One is putting the kettle on the fire, another is lifting a pail of water, a third is at the dresser taking down the plates, another is moving here and there. Their faces are radiant, their forms are beautiful, they are not clad in ordinary garb, they are beautiful white-winged angels, and as one writer has put it, the charm of the picture lies in the fact that no incongruity strikes the beholder. "The Angels in the Kitchen"—that is the spirit of our Christian faith.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask,
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God."

If, in the presence of God, there is fullness of joy, what a merry Christmas it should be for us, since Christ is Immanuel—"God with us." "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . unto *you* is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ *the Lord.*"

From an old print ADORATION OF THE THREE KINGS

A Christmas Mystery

To be Used as a Part of a Community Christmas Sing

By Jane Judge and Linwood Taft

THE scene shows dimly the exterior of the stable in Bethlehem with a wide door which is closed facing the audience. There is a rather large fore-stage. At the time set for the beginning of the Mystery the audience is asked to sing *O Little Town of Bethlehem.*

The second stanza may be omitted without loss of effect. As the stanzas are being sung Mary and Joseph are seen, in a bright light, approaching from the left. Joseph is leading the donkey upon which Mary rides. They look about as though seeking shelter. Seeing the stable Mary dismounts and, followed by Joseph, enters. The door is closed. The bright light fades and the scene remains dim.

With the briefest possible pause the voices begin *The First Noël,* singing the first, second, fourth, and sixth stanzas.

The first Noël the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Chorus

The chorus is sung after each stanza. As the first stanza is sung certain shepherds enter from both sides and take their places on the fore-stage as though watching over their flocks. They may light a small fire of twigs that they take from the folds of their cloaks or the pockets of their smock-like garments. They gather about the fire for warmth and companionship. The action of the shepherds throughout the remaining stanzas should be suited to the sentiments expressed or implied in the words. During stanza four a brilliant star suspended over the stable is lighted. At the end of the carol the singers pass immediately to *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.*

At the third line of the first stanza two angels, illumined by a brilliant amber light from above, are seen standing, one at each side of the stable door. At the end of stanza four the shepherds, who have been showing their awe at the appearance of the heavenly visitants and joy at the tidings they have brought, enter into the stable, closing the door as they enter. The angels remain standing as if on guard. During the singing of stanza five a host of children dressed in white may be disclosed standing on both sides of the stable and near the back of the scene. They join in singing stanza six. At the end of the stanza they disappear.

The chorus or audience then sings the first stanza of *We Three Kings of Orient Are.*

We three kings or Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

Chorus

O Star of wonder, Star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to Thy perfect light.

MELCHIOR:

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring, to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
Over us all to reign.

Chorus

O Star of wonder, etc.

CASPAR:

Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh.
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship him, God most High.

Chorus

O Star of wonder, etc.

Reprinted from *The Drama.*

BALTHAZAR:

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Chorus

O Star of wonder, etc.

Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice,
Alleluia, Alleluia;
Earth to the heavens replies.

Chorus

O Star of wonder, etc.

As the first stanza is being sung the three Wise-men come from different directions, meeting at the front of the fore-stage. They are in a brilliant white light. Stanzas two, three, and four may be sung as solos or by the whole audience. While stanza two is being sung Melchior leaves the other two kings and goes slowly towards the stable bearing the bags of gold in his hands. As the chorus is being sung he enters and the door is closed. Caspar, holding high his casket of frankincense, slowly approaches the stable during the singing of stanza three and enters as the chorus is sung. The door is again closed. Balthazar, carrying his vase or jar of myrrh in both hands and followed by the brilliant white light, as were also Melchior and Caspar, approaches the stable during the singing of stanza four and enters while the chorus is being sung. As the door closes behind him the brilliant light is turned off and the scene is dim except for the amber lights on the angels and the light from the star. It remains so during the singing of stanza five.

As the audience begins the carol *Holy Night, Peaceful Night,* the heavenly hosts, represented by the children in white at both sides of the stable, may again be revealed. They may join in singing this closing carol. At the same time the wide door of the stable is thrown open, showing the group within in the brilliant, white light. Mary, with a halo-like reflection from the Holy Child on her face, is seen bending over a rude manger. Joseph stands at her left but out of the radiance that comes from the manger. Two of the Wise-men are kneeling in front of the manger offering their gifts. The third Wise-man stands at Mary's left but in front of the manger and facing it rather than the audience. The shepherds are kneeling at each side of and a little apart from the two Wise-men in the center. The tableau is held during the whole carol. The lights are turned off as the third stanza is ended.

Suggestions for the Scene

The front entrance to a church or other public building makes a good setting for this Mystery. If there are not wide doors into the building or if they are too far removed from the audience, neutral colored curtains hung at the front of the portico may represent the stable. The steps and sidewalk immediately in front of them may be used as a fore-stage. Should the Mystery be given indoors any stage or church chancel may be readily set for the scene.

The bright light that follows Mary and Joseph and the Wise-men and that illumines the final tableau may be an ordinary theater spot light, an electric car headlight, or an automobile searchlight.

When Mary dismounts, the donkey should be led away by an attendant in costume.

The two angels may be in place behind curtains which are drawn aside at the proper time or they may step from behind the sides of the curtain which represents the stable onto small square platforms some six inches high, and only large enough to appear as the pedestals of statues. The amber lights from above may easily be strung on wires and hooded from the audience but reflected down upon the angels.

The back and sides of the five-pointed star above the stable may be made from tin and the front covered with a pale yellow parchment or cloth. Electric lights are bright enough to give the needed brilliance through this. If no electric lights are available a large oil lamp with a reflector might be boxed in, a five-pointed star being cut from the front of the box. As the stage is dim much of the time only the light through the cutout would show, the box being lost sight of in the dimness.

The children representing the heavenly hosts may be hidden behind curtains that are drawn back as the occasion requires, or they may simply take their places quietly when the time comes for each of their songs and leave quietly again at the end of the songs. The children are not essential to the Mystery but add to the effect.

In the final tableau the rude manger occupies the back center of the scene. Mary is back of it and bending over as though in adoration of the Babe. A strong light with a good reflector may be hidden in the manger and will throw the radiance upon the face of Mary.

Costumes

Mary should be dressed in an old rose garment of no particular style. Over her head is draped a rich blue mantle as in pictures of the Holy Family. Joseph wears a long russet garment that is girdled at the waist. His feet are bare but he wears sandals and carries a staff. His beard and hair are long. The attendant who leads away the donkey may be dressed similar to the shepherds.

The shepherds are dressed in skins and their arms and legs are bare. They may wear peasant smocks of blue and green over ordinary clothes with their feet and legs wrapped to the knees with strips of cloth. In the latter case they wear shapeless, baggy caps. They carry staffs or shepherd crooks.

The two angels should wear long, flowing garments of lemon tarlatan over white. Their hair hangs loosely. Each carries a spray of lilies such as is carried by the angel of the annunciation.

The Wise-men or kings can be most effectively costumed from the wardrobe of the Masonic order of Shriners. Where this is not possible long Oriental garments and turbans will give the effect desired. The colors should be yellow, green, or blue.

The children representing the heavenly hosts may be effectively draped in sheets or may be more elaborately dressed in long garments made from white cheesecloth.

The Music

The audience should sing the carols, as this gives them a feeling of participation in the Mystery. It is often well to have a small group of well-trained singers sitting near the front to lead the singing. A small group may do all of the singing but the effect is not so good either from the standpoint of the Mystery or from the emotional response of the audience.

"God Bless Us, Every One!"

By Paul S. Leinbach

"*GOD bless us, every one!*" How that sweet prayer of Tiny Tim has warmed this old world's heart. Its brotherly creed is voiced nobly, too, in Markham's "Outwitted":

> "He drew a circle that shut me out—
> Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
> But Love and I had the wit to win;
> We drew a circle that took him in!"

Whether our church schools have a "White Gifts for the King" service or not at this joy-time of the year, this real Children's Day calls for "a sacrament of self-denial" for the little brothers and sisters of the Christ-child. The rapturous music that is born of the laughter of happy children speaks peace only to the heart that has shared in a ministry of helpfulness to his little ones. The whitest service we can render to our King is to show our love for "the least of these," even the most depraved, diseased, deformed and delinquent. At this gladsome time we may selfishly prefer to think only of pleasant and satisfying things, but God pity us if in celebrating the birthday of our King we shut out of our hearts the children of sorrow and need. The mute appeal of the torn stocking of the waif and the orphan, the wail of the mothers who watch their babies starve in Russia and the Near East, the pitiful need of millions of boys and girls whose lives are shadowed by spiritual illiteracy, the plea of the unfortunates born "under the bar sinister," or doomed by the degradation, dissension or divorce of parents to live amid influences that dwarf or even destroy the inalienable right of every child to a good home—these are supreme challenges to the exercise of the Christmas spirit. If you do not hear and heed them, you will have no Christmas in your soul. By all the cries of friendless and homeless wanderers in God's world, by every grief that summons sympathy and every hunger that pleads before the friendly door of your Christmas heart, find the real blessing of the season in being a blessing to others. Every orphan's stocking should remind us of that far-off Bethlehem manger that once cradled a little Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes; every song about God's best gift to men should voice for us the yearnings in the heart of every child for some love and good cheer at Christmas time. In remembering them we bring white gifts to the White Comrade, for the whitest Christmas is that which reveals most kindly deeds done to his little ones out of love to him whose love to us is so wonderful.

Nor is this all. One must be childlike to celebrate Christmas; the story of this sacred season must of necessity be incredible to all except the pure in heart. Little children, as they look at the lighted tree and hear the familiar carols, are listening in the stillness of the night to hear the angels sing. They know how the sudden rush of melody came down from the silent stars in words which men cannot forget. To them the dear old story is natural, simple, inevitable; they would never think of questioning it, for it is as much a part of their lives as the love of parents or the comforts of home. And it is only when we crowd about the children—God bless them!—that the beautiful story of Christmas lives again in our hearts, and has its balm for pain and its power to sweeten the bitterest waters through which we must pass. It is this which inspires us to give and to forgive, to come back from the frozen land of selfishness to the land of warmth and light. These are the great joys of a white Christmas—to bless the children, and to be in turn blessed by the children's faith and hope and love. It surrounds this merry time with an indefinable halo; it is the incarnation of the spirit of childhood.

White Gift Suggestions

By HENRY B. HAZARD

ONE school listed the following suggestions on a folder which was distributed with the envelopes to contain the Christmas gifts of the members. A place was provided for name and address and the members checked the service they were especially interested in rendering during the following year. The folders were returned at the White Gift Service, and when tabulated formed the basis of requests for voluntary workers.

Read the Bible more regularly.

Prepare my lesson each Sunday.

Attend church service regularly.

Attend Thursday evening classes.

Encourage my children to prepare the lesson and be on time.

Be loyal to the church school as well as to my department and class.

Sing in church-school choir.

Play in church-school orchestra.

Be a home department visitor.

Assist the supervisor of teacher reserves.

Act as substitute teacher and prepare a specific lesson each week. (State department preference.)

As a person with kindergarten training, I offer myself as an assistant in the Beginners' Department.

Prepare and tell suitable stories in ——— Department.

Lead in prayer at church-school service of worship upon adequate notice.

Assist in the recreational and social activities of the church-school by ———

Learn to operate duplicating machine, and do so when needed.

Typewrite for one hour per week.

Make a poster when needed.

Be responsible for placing kindergarten chairs and other equipment before and after session.

Act as messenger.

Distribute programs and books in ample time for use and collect same after the service.

Make a church-school bulletin board.

With the other members of my class, furnish for one month flowers for the general superintendent's desk; to be used later in church.

Call on new members as their names are assigned.

Respond to any request of the church-school officers or teachers for service for which I am fitted.

Contribute to the support of the church school according as God has prospered me.

Redeeming the Children Appointed Unto Death

By Minna McEuen Meyer

An Armenian Nurse in Constantinople, Trained by an American Near East Relief Worker

"WHAT are you going to do when you grow up?" asked an American visitor of a small, ragged, hungry-looking boy wandering aimlessly about on a street of an Armenian city.

The boy set his teeth and clenched his fists. "I'm going to kill the man that killed my father," he replied.

The boy's defiant attitude showed plainly that a reproof would be useless at that time, and it was not administered, but other questions followed in which the American showed his friendly interest in the boy. Finally, he asked, "What do you want more than anything else?"

The boy dropped his eyes and a moment later burst into tears. "I want some one to love me," he sobbed.

That American has come home with the conviction that one of the best investments that can be made in world friendship is in saving and training these children—thirty thousand of whom in that Caucasus region are fatherless and motherless, and are in our hands to do with as we will. It can be done for less than the price of a battleship.

Moreover, in the republic of Armenia the many orphans—now children responsive to love and care and training—will in a few years be the people who will dominate the situation in their country. They will be the industrial leaders, the teachers, the creators of public opinion, and they will be able to elect to office whom they will.

Throughout the Near East American relief workers have gathered in from the streets of the cities and from deserts and wild places in the mountains more than a hundred thousand children. These are given food and medical attention, and already they have been transformed from wretched little skeletons into healthy, happy, normal children. This of itself has been a great task, and the result is a great achievement.

Housed in groups of buildings in Armenia, Syria, Palestine and Constantinople, the orphanage families consist of many hundreds, or even thousands of children. The largest, at Alexandropol, Armenia, numbers approximately eighteen thousand. Such families demand much feeding, bathing and putting to bed. But week by week the children are learning to do more for themselves. Recently the American Red Cross donated to one of the large orphanages 4,000 pairs of men's socks from its surplus war supplies, and small girl knitters remodeled these to fit tiny feet. So skillful were they at their work, which they took up with practically no instruction, that their American friends are wondering whether generations of a race famous for its needlework produce children with knitting fingers.

The cooking is simplified by the Oriental custom of having one "dish" and, according to some commentators, Jesus suggested to Martha that "one dish is enough." This one, however, includes several ingredients. Sometimes in the orphanages it is composed of beans and onions cooked together with a little oil—occasionally butter but oftener sunflower seed oil. Sometimes (perhaps three times a week) it is meat, potatoes, corn grits and onions—always onions if they are obtainable, for when the orphanage mother asks, "What shall we have for dinner tomorrow?" these are the first mentioned—and the children are just as pleased to have her consult their wishes as they would be if there were a great variety of menus.

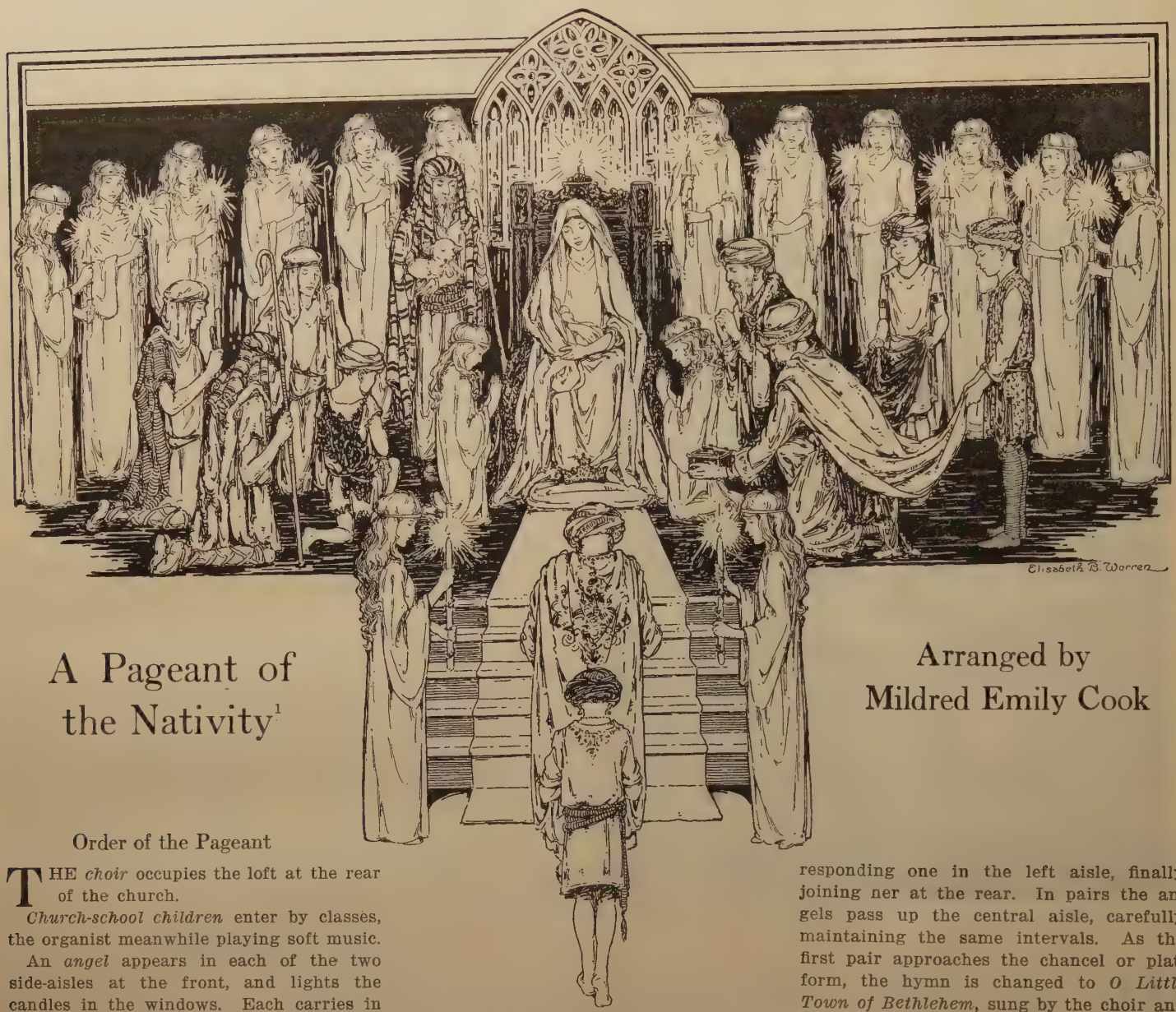
Fresh Air and Salt Water

Is it fear of "the night air" that causes Oriental peoples to shut it out entirely? Perhaps the custom arose because of perils of men and of wild beasts, but it persists

(Continued on page 134)

A Clean-Up Squad in a Constantinople Orphanage

Adoration of the Kings and Shepherds



A Pageant of the Nativity[1]

Arranged by Mildred Emily Cook

Order of the Pageant

THE *choir* occupies the loft at the rear of the church.

Church-school children enter by classes, the organist meanwhile playing soft music.

An *angel* appears in each of the two side-aisles at the front, and lights the candles in the windows. Each carries in one hand a large (two-foot) lighted candle, twined with smilax, and in the other a wax taper with which to do the lighting. They move from front to rear, from window to window, meet, pass up the central aisle and out. All lights, except those for the choir, are turned off before the last candle is lighted.

The *minister* enters, followed by two angels with lighted candles, and goes to the reading-desk. The angels stand on either side to give him light while he reads Luke 2. 1–20, and then Matthew 2. 1–12. The minister is conducted by the attendant angels to a front pew, where he remains seated. Angels go out by the way they came.

The choir begins *O Come, All Ye Faithful.* From each side of the front, six *angels*, arranged in the order of their height, beginning with the smallest, proceed along the side-aisles, singing as they go, in concert with the choir and people; each bears in both hands a tall candle, twined with smilax to simulate the carving on a candlestick, the flame being at the height of the eyes. They move very slowly, about seven pews' distance apart, each one in the right aisle in line with the corresponding one in the left aisle, finally joining ner at the rear. In pairs the angels pass up the central aisle, carefully maintaining the same intervals. As the first pair approaches the chancel or platform, the hymn is changed to *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, sung by the choir and congregation, while the following action takes place. Two *shepherds* remove a screen on the platform from before a central group. *Mary* kneels behind the manger, facing the congregation; her hands are folded in adoration, and she bends toward a light in one end of the manger. *Joseph*, a few feet to her right, leans on a staff, looking in the direction of the manger. Two little *angels*, with smaller lighted candles, kneel, one at each end of the manger, facing it.

Each pair of the approaching *angels* go up the steps leading to the group, and kneel with bowed heads an instant; they then separate, each angel passing to her own side and place. They form a broken semicircle—the first ones, the smallest, being stationed nearest the congregation, while the last ones approach the back of the central group; all face toward the manger (see diagram No. 3).

¶ As it is desirable that the congregation should take part in the service, instead of remaining passive spectators, they may be invited by the minister, before the pageant begins, to rise and remain standing during the first and last hymns, to kneel or bow the head during the *Sanctus*, and to join in the singing so far as it is possible to do so from memory, since the light in the church is not sufficient for them to read by. The hymns should not be announced. The children would presumably have practiced the carols.

[1] Copyright, 1922, by Mildred Emily Cook.

A *lullaby* is sung to the Christ-child by one of the angels, or by all or a part of the choir.

All sing *Silent Night.*

The choir sings *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*, while one angel leaves her station, bows her head before the manger, goes down the central aisle, and admits four *shepherds* at the church-door. Two pairs of angels, slowly following her, take stations in the central aisle, one pair near each end, each angel facing her companion. When the doorkeeper-angel, returning, has passed the pair of angels nearest the platform, and the shepherds, in single file, are between the two pairs, all move forward. The first angel and her following pair kneel in adoration at the top of the steps, and return to their places. The music changes to *The First Noel*, sung by the choir and congregation, while the shepherds ascend the steps, one by one, kneel and prostrate themselves in Eastern fashion, touching their foreheads to the floor, with arms outstretched. The last one, a boy, presents a *lamb*, which Joseph receives. They take their places at Mary's right, kneeling inside the semicircle of angels (see diagrams Nos. 1 and 3).

Two shepherds bring a chair to serve as a *throne*, and place it in front of the manger. Mary rises, followed by Joseph, takes the Child (represented by the light and a doll) in her arms, goes forward to the chair, accompanied by the two little angels, who then kneel beside the chair, facing it. Joseph remains standing near by, and a little retired.

The men of the choir sing *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, the rest of the choir and the congregation joining in the chorus. Meanwhile the doorkeeper-angel and three pairs of angels lead in three *kings*, each followed by an attendant, who holds up the train of his long mantle (see diagram No. 2). At the close of four stanzas of the hymn, the doorkeeper-angel will have reached the steps, remaining there until the choir and congregation begin to sing *As With Gladness Men of Old.* During this time, the kings prostrate themselves in the same manner as the shepherds (each attendant keeping hold of the mantle, and kneeling behind his master), and then present their gifts, which they place at Mary's feet—one his golden crown, one a lighted censer, which he first swings before her, and one a small chest or box of myrrh—and take their places at Mary's left, kneeling inside the semicircle (see diagram No. 3).

The choir sings *Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne.* The two angels nearest the congregation hand their candles to the angels next them, open a white cloth (already lying on the floor near one of them), hold it near the top of the steps, in front of Mary, while children, assisted by the minister, come up one by one, and place in it toys,[1] designed as gifts for other children. The angels with two candles are now standing near, to give more light. The angels holding the cloth then remove it to one side, take back their candles, and resume their positions.

The choir sings the *Sanctus*, while all kneel, including the angels.

The *benediction* is then pronounced by the minister.

All except angels sing *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*, while the kings, attendants, shepherds, and angels leave the platform—a pair of angels preceding each king with his attendant and each pair of shepherds, the remaining pair closing the procession. They pass down the central aisle, and at the rear of the church alternate groups turn into the side-aisles, and pass out through exits at the front of the church—or otherwise leave by the church-door. Two shepherds, as they leave, replace the screen in front of the central group. Lights are turned on.

Music

The choir may be seated on the main floor, at the rear, if there is no loft, and will lead all the singing. The hymns are chosen because of their familiarity; they are designed to interpret the action, making speaking parts unnecessary. The angels may sing *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, and *Silent Night.* The congregation, including the church school, may sing all the music except the *lullaby*, the *Sanctus*, and the stanzas of *We Three Kings of Orient Are.*

One person should be stationed in concealment near the organ, in such a position that she can watch the action. She is to direct the organist when to change from one hymn to another, according to the point that the action has reached. The following list is for her guidance:

Church school enters—soft music.

Angels light candles—soft music continued.

Pause while minister reads Gospel.

When attendant angels are well out of sight, begin *O Come, All Ye Faithful.* Continue until first angels reach the platform-steps.

Begin *O Little Town of Bethlehem.* Continue until angels are all in their places, and a little longer.

Begin *lullaby.*

Begin *Silent Night*—play to end.

Begin *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night.* Continue until shepherds have reached the steps. Then begin *The First Noel.* Continue until the chair has been placed for Mary, and she has seated herself in it.

Begin *We Three Kings of Orient Are.* Continue for four stanzas.

Begin *As With Gladness Men of Old.* Use this and *Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne* to continue through presentation of gifts by kings and children.

Begin *Sanctus.*

Pause for Benediction.

Begin *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing.* Continue until all have disappeared.

Properties

Candles in the windows. One candle, about a foot high, should be placed in each window, supported by a candlestick of any material—glass, wood, brass, etc.

Lights in the church. All lights should be turned off as soon as the candles in the windows have been lighted, except for so many as will enable the choir to read their music.

Star. Star-shaped box of tin, like a much-enlarged cake-cutter set on edge, the front open except for yellow paper pasted over it, the back covered with a dark cloth, to keep in the light of the electric bulb placed inside. Or a cardboard box, painted black, with a star-shaped hole cut in the bottom, and covered with the yellow paper. The opening should be about ten inches across from point to point. The star should be placed high up on the wall at the back of the central group, not far from the ceiling. The wiring should be arranged so that the light can be turned on when the minister is reading Matthew 2. 1-9.

Candles for the angels. These may be large two-foot church-candles, or they may be plumbers' candles elongated by means of tubes of stiff white paper or flexible cardboard. About six inches from the top, there should be a saucer to catch the wax. This is made of a circle of cardboard, about five inches in diameter, with a hole in the center the size of the candle. A fence around this, to prevent the wax from running over, can be made by cutting a piece of stiff paper an inch and a half wide, and the length of the circle's circumference, creasing it in the center lengthwise, and slashing it irregularly. The crease can be fitted to the edge of the cardboard disk; the slashed part, underneath, will fold over, and can be pasted firmly to the under side of the disk, keeping the fence upright. Smaller candles for the little angels.

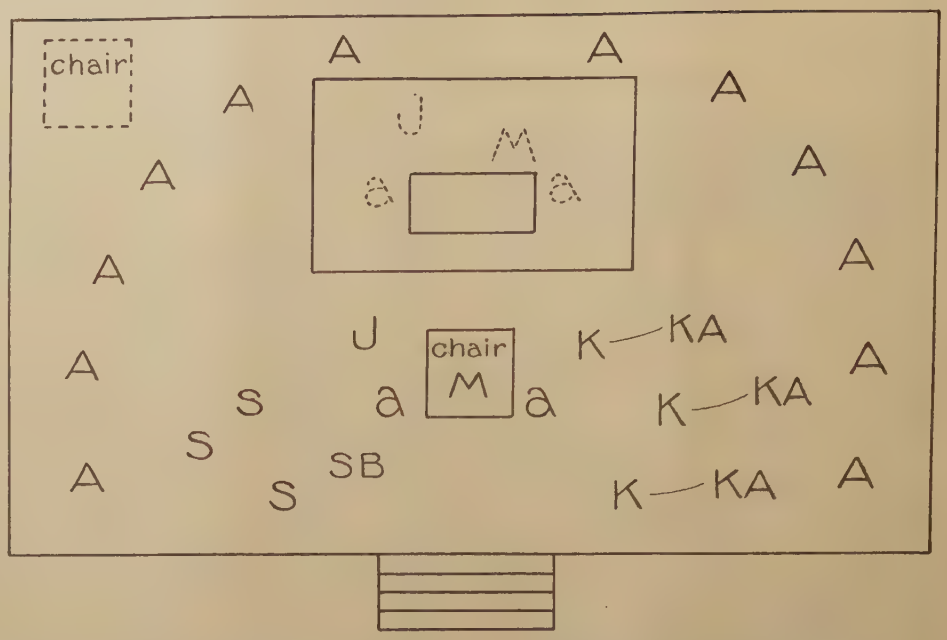
Two yards of smilax from a florist, when pulled to pieces, is enough to supply twelve candles. It should be wound up the candle as far as the disk, to give the effect of the carving on a candlestick. As a substitute, twigs of hemlock, or other bits of greenery could be wound on, secured by a narrow dark ribbon or cord.

Evergreen trees. These are not essential, but could be put in the corners of the platform, at the back of the central group, to conceal the organ, or in any place where they do not obscure the action from any point in the congregation.

Kneeling-cushions. Small cushions are advisable, not only for marking the stations of the angels, shepherds, kings, and attendants, but to make kneeling easier.

[1] In a small church, there could be used, in place of the children's presentation of toys, an offering of money by adults. The two angels, instead of holding a cloth, could stand on the steps, or at the foot of them, holding an alms-basin between them, while the members of the congregation came up singly to put their offering in the basin, being previously notified of this arrangement at an earlier service, or before the beginning of the pageant.

No. 3



Screen. Plain three-leaf screen of brown or green burlap.

Platform. A second, smaller platform, about a foot high, large enough to hold the central group, should be placed on the large platform.

Manger. A shallow packing-box, raised on short legs made of strips of wood, the whole covered with brown cloth.

Straw. The straw should be visible, catching the light at the edge of the manger; a handful or so will be sufficient.

A *doll* can be used or not, as desired.

Light in the manger. Have a strong light, protected by a hood like that on a "gooseneck," attached to a fixture in the church by a long cord. A hand-flashlight is not likely to be strong enough. There is a chance that the light may become disconnected when Mary takes it up to go forward to the throne. A long cord is necessary, and Joseph should be ready to disentangle it.

Gifts of the kings. The crown can be made of cardboard, covered with gilt paper or paint, and decorated with gilt cord or braid. Cheap pins, with large glass jewels, are easily fastened to the cardboard.

The censer can either be borrowed or improvised from a brass bowl, in which is set an iron cup or dish to hold the coals. A special charcoal for this purpose, which can be ignited at a gas jet, is sold by church-supply houses, as is the incense; but coals from the stove or furnace, or the sticks of punk used for Japanese hand-warmers, are possible substitutes. The bowl can be hung from chains, or carried as a brazier on a tray. Incense should be put on just as the king starts up the aisle. An ounce or two is sufficient.

The myrrh-box. This can be a small chest, or a covered bowl of brass or wood, painted with gold and colors. A cardboard box of suitable proportions can be used, covered with gilt paper.

The lamb. This can be made of white wool eiderdown or cotton flannel, cut according to a pattern issued by the *Ladies' Home Journal.* The legs and tail should be cut twice as long as the pattern, which has the proportions of a sheep, rather than of a lamb.

Shepherd-crooks. These may be borrowed, or specially made.

Spotlight. Since the candles of the angels do not give enough light to reveal the richness of the final tableau, it might be well to have a strong light thrown from the rear or side of the church on the central group, kings, and shepherds, during the singing of the Sanctus.

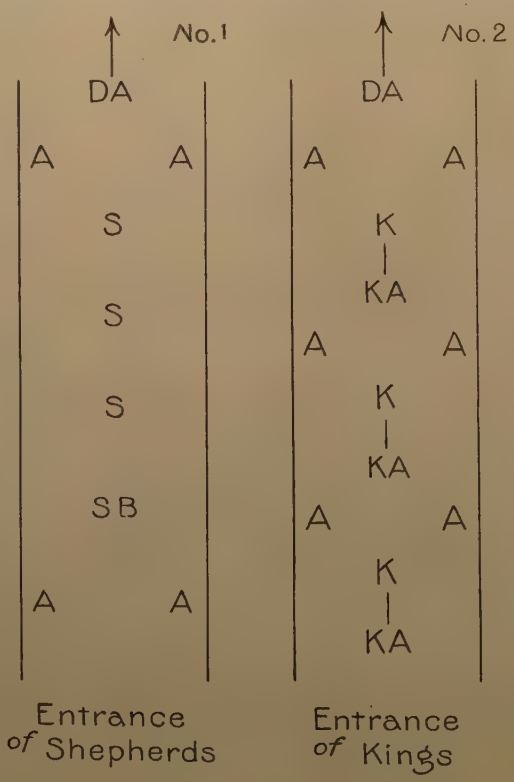
Chair as throne. A carved church chair, or a good-sized plain armchair, covered with drapery of some rich material.

White cloth. A sheet will serve the purpose.

Staff. For Joseph—five or six feet tall.

M—Mary
J—Joseph
a—Little angel
A—Large angel
S—Shepherd
SB—Shepherd-boy
K—King
KA—King's attendant
DA—Doorkeeper-angel

Key to Diagrams



Costumes

The costuming and grouping should give somewhat the effect of an old Italian painting of the Nativity, rather than keep strictly to historically Eastern styles. The colors should be soft and rich, and the materials heavy enough to fall in graceful folds. Two sorts of Eastern headdress can be used: one, the turban, a soft scarf wound tight around the head; the other, a piece of cloth draped, in Arab fashion, over the head and shoulders, and confined by a narrow band or cord round the crown. The costumes need not be finished with great care, as the light is not sufficient to reveal details. Employ safety pins, rather than sewing.

Mary. Long robe of old-blue cotton crêpe over a white underdress. On her head a white veil, with a long piece of the old-blue material draped over it, just a narrow edge of white remaining visible.

Joseph. Long tunic of white cotton cloth, with wide colored girdle. Dark-red cloak, either plaid or striped. Arab headdress of white, with yellow band. Beard. Tall staff.

Angels. Long, straight, full robes of white cheesecloth, with angel sleeves, worn over nightdresses. Flowing hair. Narrow white ribbon round the crown of the head. No wings or tinsel. Candles (see Properties).

Shepherds. Tunics of dark colors, to the knee. Leggings, made of strips of brown cambric, wound round the feet, and

(Continued on page 137)

Christmas Carol Customs

By Carl F. Price

A LITTLE brown thrush one day last June sang so merrily by the lakeside at Evanston that the lively conversation of a group of diners was suddenly interrupted, as they stopped to listen to his treetop singing and to exclaim their delight in his woodland carol. Yes, "carol" seemed the most fitting word for describing that melody; for somehow to us at least carolling has always been associated with the singing of birds—or of children. And this is quite consonant with the true definition of a carol. It has in its true form the exquisite simplicity of pastoral music and the child-like mind.

The first Christmas hymn was sung by the angel choir who announced the birth of Jesus to the astonished shepherds as they watched their flocks by night; and there is an ancient tradition that as they hurried to the manger cradle of the royal Babe they sang their songs of joy, the folksongs of their simple, pastoral life. In a poetical sense this may be regarded as the origin of the Christmas carol, and in its simple beauty the carol has preserved somewhat of the spirit of the shepherds' glad and eager approach to the manger. Just as Turner's painting has treated shepherd life as typical of the ecclesiastical (as Ruskin reminds us), so our church music has appropriated pastoral melodies for the sacred uses of Christmas time.

The origin of carol-singing in the popular celebration of Christmas and of the quaint customs associated with it, is not so easy to determine. Clement in the first century exhorted thus: "Brethren, keep diligently feast days and truly in the first place the day of Christ's birth"; and probably hymns were sung at these festivals. But carolling is supposed to have begun in Spain. Aurelius Prudentius, who was born in Spain, 348 A. D., is said to have been the writer of the first carols, and these were written in Latin; a famous example of twenty-nine verses beginning with the line, "Quid est quod arctum circulum."

As for the customs which accompanied carol-singing, many of them in those early Christian centuries were adapted from the secular customs of the people in their ancient midwinter festival, at first prohibited by the church because of their association with heathenism, but later, more wisely, transmuted into a part of the holy festival of Christmas.

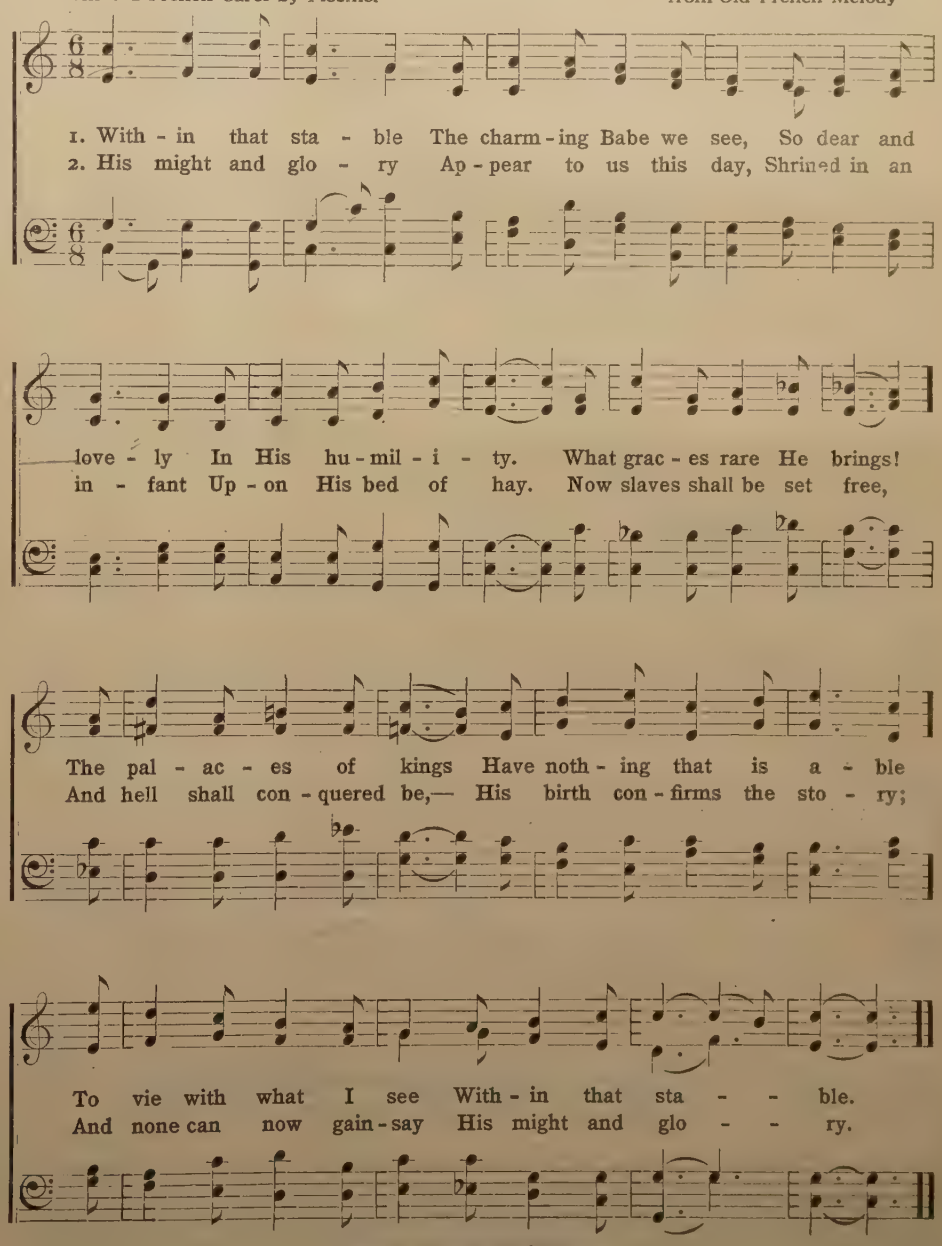
For example, the Yule-tide custom (Hiaul or Houl), which began in Scandinavia amid heathendom, came to be a part of the Christian festival and in the northern countries of Europe persists to some extent to this day. A great, rugged block of wood, the Yule-log (or clog), usually gnarled and massive enough to burn throughout all the days of the Christmas season, was set upon the spacious hearth, and each one in the home would sit upon it in turn and sing a carol and wish the others a merry Christmas. Then, by the light of the Yule-log, Yule-cakes were eaten, each marked with the image of the newborn Babe. Sometimes, as in the twelfth century, the Yule dish was introduced by the sound of trumpets, and carols were sung at the opening of the Christmas feast.

Feasting, accompanied by songs, has been ever since the early days an important part of the Christmas celebration, and sometimes this has been carried to ridiculous excess, as in the fifteenth century, when both in France and England puddings and viands were placed on the altar in the church, while carols were being sung. One English Christmas pie has been described by Hone as being nine feet in circumference, containing "2 bushel of flour, 20 pounds of butter, 4 geese, 2 turkeys, 2 rabbits, 4 wild ducks, 2 woodcocks, 6 snipes and 4 partridges, 2 neats' tongues, 2 curlews, 7 blackbirds, and 6 pigeons." Such

Within That Stable

Translated by Carl F. Price from Old French Carol by Flechier

Arranged by Carl F. Price from Old French Melody



Copyright, 1922, by Carl F. Price

a concoction must have been worthy of a mighty song!

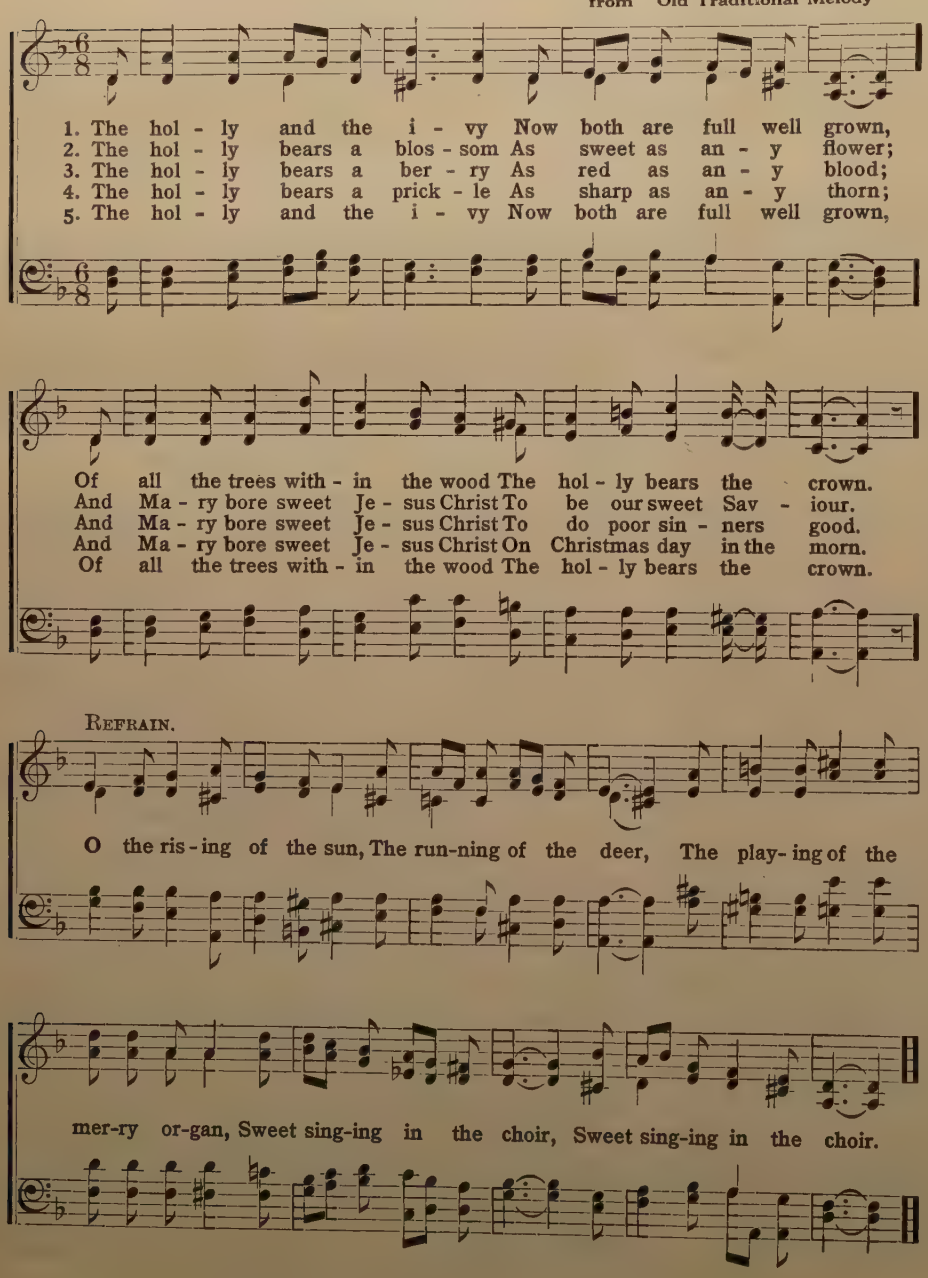
Mistletoe, a survival from pre-Christian customs, came to be emblematical of the coming of Christ. Gregory Nazianzen (389 A. D.) protested against the use of boughs and evergreens as a heathen practice. But as centuries advanced the custom persisted. At York Cathedral the altar at Christmas was adorned with greens and mistletoe, the sacred "all-heel," which had been clipped from the trees with brass hatchets, called "celts"; and when the heralds proclaimed the Christmas festival the people of York shouted "Ule! Ule!" and sang carols of joy.

In France Christmas is called "Noël" (or "Nouel"), possibly derived from "Natalis," the Latin for "birthday." As early as the thirteenth century "Noël!" was shouted by the people of Paris when Christmas was proclaimed and sung in their carols. From the Troubadors of Provence and the Trouveres of the north of France came a quickening impulse to song in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and French carolling, which had begun in the ninth century under ecclesiastical protest, now took on a new brightness of melody. Nativity-plays, produced two centuries later, developed them more fully, and succeeding ages have added to the richness of France's carols, as is amply shown in Pellegrin's "Dictionnaire de Noëls." The tender Christ-child cradle songs (*berceuses*) of France are accompanied by a gently rocking rhythm; while the more animated carols were employed in the pageantry representing the "Three Kings of Colen," or Magi; wherein appeared as the leading actors Melchior, an aged long-bearded man bearing gold; Jasper, a youth with frankincense as his gift; and Balthazar of dark countenance, bringing myrrh.

The Holly and the Ivy

A Christmas Carol

Arranged by Carl F. Price, from Old Traditional Melody



Germany, whose Christmas is celebrated so richly in music, traces her carols back to the Medieval Ring Dances which were always accompanied by song. Like that of the French Troubadors, the influence of the German Minnesingers in the Middle Ages stimulated the use and development of German carols, until the *Weihnachtslied* came to be an essential part of the Christmas celebration. Martin Luther tells us that, while a student at Erfurt, "we went from house to house and village to village, singing popular Christmas carols in four-part harmony." Among the many German carol customs today one of the most picturesque occurs in German Bohemia, where the Erz mountain folk enact a Nativity play, and at the head of a procession through the towns and villages a star is borne, hanging from a fishing-pole. At length, forming a semi-circle about a Christmas tree adorned with apples and ribands, the paraders sing the Star Carol, *Ir lieben meine Singer.*

The Trovatori of Italy gave to Italian song a reawakening which affected carolry. The Pifferai, drawn chiefly from the shepherd class, decked in broad-brimmed hats and red tassels and peacock feathers, would stroll the streets at Christmas time, playing their musical instruments and singing carols. Before the Reformation these pipers of Rome would make music in the streets while the priests in full canonical dress marched in solemn procession, bearing lights about Saint Paul's. In later times, so incessant was their music by night as well as by day, that Pope Leo XIII was obliged to forbid these performances before 4 A. M. These quaint minstrels may still be heard in Abruzzi, Umbria and Marche; but in the cities one is more likely now to be serenaded by drums and the notes of the sminfaroli, playing Christmas folk melodies.

Spain, too, had her Troubadors to fill the hearts and voices of the people with song. The earliest Christmas carols in Spain were accompanied by joyous dances. Later the play of Rey de Havas (Bean-cake King), a custom of the early Catholics imitating the Roman Saturnalia, gave rise to many of the Spanish carols.

The ancient "bambino" custom, observed chiefly in Spain, may have given rise to the very first Christmas carols in Europe. The Spanish priests placed in the chancel of the church a crib, bearing a living baby or a "bambino." About this representation of the manger the people sang their carols. Later this custom, called the *nacimiento*, was followed in the homes of the devout; little baby houses and diminutive rocks representing the scene about which stood clay figures of shepherds, ox and ass kneeling before the Holy Child beside Joseph and Mary. Here large parties gathered to listen to passages from sacred plays and sing

(Continued on page 139)

Denominational News for December

Disciples of Christ

THE Department of Religious Education of the United Christian Missionary Society, in cooperation with the State and Regional Superintendents, is planning to make much of the "giving Christmas" ideal this year.

A special "Giving Christmas" service builded around the centralizing theme of the "stewardship of life" and emphasizing the gifts of self, substance, service and supplication is being prepared. These four things will be stressed as suitable and acceptable "love gifts" to bring to the Master of Life at Christmas time.

The Christmas season with its natural spirit of "gift giving" affords an unusual opportunity for the local church to emphasize the dedication of life to the Master's work. This year the departments of Education and Evangelism of the United Christian Missionary Society will work together in emphasizing in a special way the spirit of personal evangelism in connection with the Christmas season.

Teachers of classes will be asked to make a special study of their pupils and in personal conference help them to see and feel that the most suitable "white gift" they can bring to the Master on Christmas day, if they have not already acknowledged him as Lord of their life, will be the dedication of their own lives to the work of his kingdom.

This year, as heretofore, the gifts of substance will be sent to the Ministerial Relief Department of the United Christian Missionary Society and will be used to help care for and make happy and comfortable the aged and dependent ministers and missionaries. Every disciple is asked to make a special "love gift" at the Christmas season for these worthy ministers and missionaries whose life and work are a testimony to the greatness of their service in the days that have gone by to the work of the kingdom of God. May your "love gift" to their support be large enough to correspond in some measure at least to the worthwhileness of their sacrificial service to the church.

This year we are suggesting also that all those who know some aged ministers or missionaries of the church will write them special letters at the Christmas season, thanking them for their life of service and sacrifice, and helping them to feel somewhat of the joy of Christian fellowship which we merit today because we have entered into their heritage.

As heretofore the gift of rendering some special service in the life of the local church will be reemphasized. Make a list of the needs of your church and call for special volunteers to meet these needs in connection with your "giving Christmas" appeal. The fields are white unto harvest, the laborers are few. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he send forth reapers into the field." No worth-while bit of work in the local church should go undone for lack of workers. A need, made known, should constitute for all Christians a call to service.

Methodist Episcopal Church

MUCH interest is expressed in the newest member of our Sunday-school periodical family—*The Officer*, the first number of which bears the date January, 1923. For years superintendents have expressed a need for specialized help on their problems. Inquiries have come also from secretaries, treasurers, and librarians asking where they could find material bearing directly on their problems. All these specialized needs will be fully met in our new publication.

It is important for superintendents to know that *The Officer* is not intended to displace any other periodical. It will contain no lesson treatment. General principles of religious education, together with those broader aspects of administration of importance to teachers and officers alike, will be treated only incidentally. Articles bearing on these more general subjects will appear in *The Sunday School Journal* and THE CHURCH SCHOOL, both of which are intended for a wider circle of readers. A special feature will be the attention devoted to the program of worship. Several pages each month will be set aside for this purpose. The outline program as printed in the *Service and Lesson Leaf* will be supplemented by suggestions and material for the use of the superintendent.

In the November number of THE CHURCH SCHOOL a detailed account was given of the postcard shower Christmas celebration in the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is probably the first postcard shower in history for which elephants, camels, donkeys, sampans, mulecarts and wheelbarrows have been commandeered to bring it to pass.

Even now, from all quarters of the globe, there are caravans moving toward steamers laden with postcards addressed to the thirty-two thousand Methodist Sunday-school superintendents! The Boards of the church have united to make possible this postcard shower of 768,000 cards! Twenty-four to each Sunday school! Many have already arrived. The enterprising superintendent sees in this event the greatest opportunity ever presented for developing missionary education in all departments of the Sunday school. Posters, world map, programs are all being used with the cards to approach the Christmas climax when many schools will give *The World's Christmas Mail Bag* and this climax will in reality be but the beginning of real correspondence among young Christians around the world.

Methodist Episcopal Church, South

DURING the last two years the General Sunday School Board has been conducting at Lake Junaluska, in the mountains of North Carolina, summer camps for intermediate-senior boys, for intermediate-senior girls and for young people eighteen and over. The purpose of these undertakings was to test the value of the summer camp as an agency for uniting religious education with wholesome recreation. The experiment has proved so thoroughly satisfactory that the Board is planning to encourage and aid in promoting such camps throughout the church.

The General Sunday School Board will greatly enlarge the scope of its work during the quadrennium upon which it entered at the close of the General Conference in May. Departments of Extension and Missionary Education in both the home and foreign fields with directing secretaries are to be established. Sunday School Field Secretaries are to be appointed in all the foreign mission fields and the number of such secretaries in the home field is to be increased. The needs of all the foreign fields in the matter of literature are to be carefully studied and plans are to be inaugurated as rapidly as possible for meeting these needs.

The Sunday School Board has been authorized by the General Conference to enter the field of week-day religious education, and expects to employ as soon as possible a capable person to make a thorough study of the entire field with a view to recommending policies and programs. The plan of the Board is to develop types of schools suited to several varieties of community conditions and to prepare for these schools courses of study and programs of activity that are correlated with those of the church school.

Action has been taken by the Sunday School Board, pledging its continued support to the work of the Committee for Relief in the Near East. This action is in accord with that of the General Conference pledging the support of the entire denomination and appointing a committee to look after the taking of offerings. This committee has suggested that January 21 or as near thereto as practicable be observed throughout the church as Near East Relief Day, and the Sunday School Board has adopted this suggestion. If, however, there are church schools that prefer to take their offerings in December they are, of course, at liberty to do so. Indeed, so urgent is the need of those for whom collections are to be taken that the sooner they are in the hands of the Committee the better. All offerings for this cause should be forwarded to E. B. Chappell, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

A Christmas Service for All Departments of the Church School

By E. Leigh Mudge

From an old print

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

HERALD (*Intermediate boy or girl, with cloak, plumed hat and trumpet. May either commit the parts or read from a long roll*):

Hear, oh ye people, while we tell the story,
Proclaimed by angels from the clouds of glory,
Of that great hope; that lofty expectation
Strangely fulfilled in lowly adoration;
The manger-bed; the Galilean home;
The spotless life to which the world shall come;
The loving spirit which the Lord Christ leaves
In hearts and homes through countless Christmas Eves.

First, Anna, Mary's mother, will repeat
Her nation's hope to children at her feet.

SCENE I

Primary Department

(*The character of Anna, the mother of Mary, may be taken by a teacher. She is seated, sewing on a bright colored garment. Children come in, talking.*)

First Child: Mother Anna will tell us.

Second Child: Oh, yes, let us ask her.

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to
Bethlehem.
Come and behold him
Born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye bright hosts
of heaven above;
Glory to God, all glory
in the highest;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

First Child: Mother Anna, we have just come from the school. The Rabbi has been reading to us about our own town. Will you tell us what this means? It is from the holy book. (*Hands Anna a strip of paper.*)

Anna (*reads*): "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." (*To the children*) It means the Wise-men of our people have long expected a great and good king to come to the world and bring peace and goodness into the hearts of men. They have thought that he would come from our own village of Bethlehem, for the good King David was a child of Bethlehem. It has been many hundreds of years since David's day, but there are many who still hope that among the descendants of David may be born the Messiah, the Anointed One who shall be king. Perhaps even in your lifetime, my little ones, there may be a babe born in Bethlehem who shall bring great joy to the world. I wonder if we shall know him if he comes. Let us all kneel down and pray to be guided to him. (*All kneel and sing*):

"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid:

Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid."

Herald:
The night of longing passes; day is breaking,
Judæan shepherds from their slumbers waking
Behold their mountain slopes arrayed in glory
While angel voices tell a wondrous story.
Awaken, Bethlehem, to greet the morn,
For unto thee Immanuel is born!
The angel-song is hushed, but children sing
About the simple birthplace of a King.

SCENE II
Beginners' Department

(*The manger scene, Mary and Joseph. A group of children approach, first timidly, then more boldly. They lay flowers upon the ground before the manger and sing "Away in a Manger."*)

Herald:
Amid the symbols of the former glory
Of that fair land enshrined in ancient story,
A boy of twelve with kindly spirit saw
The majesty of righteousness and law,
And while his parents searched in fond alarm,
Sat in the temple courts, nor thought of harm.

SCENE III
Juniors and Young People

(*Young people take the parts of the men and women. Juniors wear tunics reaching to knees. They are slowly crossing stage carrying bundles as though on a long journey. Mary and Joseph are in advance.*)

Mary: Joseph, hast thou seen our elder son?

Joseph: No, I have not seen him since we left Jerusalem. But is he not with the company? (*He turns and looks back through the group of travelers.*)

Mary (*Also searching*): No, here are James and Joses, but Jesus is not here. Perhaps he has fallen by the wayside. It is dangerous for a boy to walk these ways alone. O, Joseph, let us hasten and find our son!

Simon: Yes, Joseph, go. I am sure you will find your son safe, for he is a brave lad, but we must not go further until he is found. We will make our camp here until you return.

(*Exit Joseph and Mary and one or two others. James and Joses would go with them, but Joseph shakes his head and Ruth puts a protecting arm about each of them, while Simon makes a campfire, piling up sticks with a flashlight underneath. Others bring sticks to put on it.*)

Joses (*A Junior*): O James, I fear some harm has come to our dear brother. Do you suppose an evil beast has devoured him?

James (*An older Junior boy*): Oh, no. Do you not remember the day he protected us from the wild boar at the foot of Mount Tabor? Nothing would dare hurt him.

Ruth: I wonder if he can still be in the temple. Before we left the temple court I saw him in the midst of a group of rabbis. They seemed very much impressed with his knowledge of our Scriptures and our holy faith. He seemed so interested in talking with them, it is possible he may have forgotten the time of our departure.

Simon: Let us have confidence that our God will protect him. We all need the care of the divine Shepherd. The night comes on and we are far from home. Let us join in our evening hymn. (*All sing, "Lead, Kindly Light."*)

Herald:
In wisdom and in stature doth increase
That lad who is to be the Prince of Peace.
Mary and Joseph would his way prepare
And guide his willing mind with gentle care,
And youthful friends obey the beckoning hand
Of leadership they cannot understand.

SCENE IV
Intermediates

(*Girls with water-pots cross stage and gather about a well curb at rear of stage. Boys, each with a staff, come in as though from a long walk.*)

Barnabas: Where is Jesus Bar-Joseph?

Philip: He has gone home, for he said his mother would be anxious until his return.

John: Jesus is more thoughtful than we. I suppose my mother would be glad to know we have returned from the mountains. (*Hesitates a moment.*) I will go and tell her. I will return soon. (*Exit.*)

Benjamin: And call to my mother as you pass the door.

Barnabas: It is strange that none of us thought how anxious our mothers might be until Jesus reminded us. But he reminds us of many things we should do and still does not scold or reproach us. It is strange how he sets us thinking. Benjamin, what does it mean? What is Jesus that we all want to follow him?

Benjamin: Some say he is to be a great man, even the King that is to come, but I can hardly believe that. You remember the saying, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But there is something in his eyes and in his voice that I do not understand.

Philip: He is different from James. He doesn't scold us for the wrong things we do, but he makes us feel that to do good is much better. And he seems to be always planning some good deed for us to do. You remember how we gathered fuel for the poor widow on the hillside? We would never have thought of that without him.

John (*who has returned*): When Jesus grows up he will be a strong man as well as good. Philip, do you remember that sycamore tree near Joseph's house that you tried to climb? As I was passing his house Jesus was climbing that tree to help a little bird that was caught in a vine among the branches.

(*Girls sing, "Fairest Lord Jesus," verses 2 and 3.*)

Herald:
Now, in the vigor of his early prime,
(In the fair season we call Christmas time)
Untwining tenderly the bonds of youth,
A man goes forth to teach his people truth;
And still the heart of Mary doth enshrine
The loyalty that holds his life divine.

SCENE V
Seniors

(*Mary seated, reading a scroll. Enter Elisabeth. Both women are now past middle life.*)

Elisabeth (*entering*): Hail, Mary, my cousin, may peace be with thee.

Mary (*rising*): Welcome, Elisabeth, my kinswoman. (*They embrace, then are seated.*) I am rejoiced that you have come. It is a lonely time, for my eldest son, Jesus, has gone to his life-work. And today was loneliest of all until you came, for it is his birthday, his thirtieth birthday.

Elisabeth: That is why I came. I knew that you would be lonely, for I, too, sent my son into the world that he might lead men to repent of their sins. And I had another reason for coming. I have good news for thee.

Mary: Good news? From Jesus?

Elisabeth: Yes; John has seen him in the wilderness of Judæa. He had been in the mountains and came down to the Jordan with a wonderful light in his face. All who saw him wondered; and when he approached the place where John was baptizing, my son saw him and knew in his heart that Jesus is the Messiah of God. Sometimes he has doubted, but I have always believed since the day when thou camest into the hill country over thirty years ago. Again I say as I said then, "Blessed art thou among women."

Mary:
My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaid;
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

I thank thee, cousin, for bringing tidings from my son who shall be known as our Lord.

Elisabeth (*with bowed head*): And I count myself blessed in being the mother of the forerunner who goeth before the Lord and prepareth the way.

Mary: Who are these who come into my home rejoicing? They are the youth of the village who remember the birthday of my son.

(*Young people enter, bowing to the older women, and sing, "O Come, All Ye Faithful," verses 1, 3 and 4.*)

Immortal Bible Stories Dramatized

The Story of a Reverent Christmas Celebration in a Small Town

By Martha Candler

THE little town of Pomfret, in the rolling hills of Connecticut, is annually, at the middle of December, the scene of a Passion Play which has gradually taken on a religious impressiveness like nothing the country has ever seen—like nothing in the world except the Oberammergau Passion Play.

The men, women and children of the town all take their parts each year with the same sort of sincerity and simple, grave dignity which, decade after decade through the centuries, has kept the Old World celebration a living representation of the Drama of Dramas. Like the Oberammergau Passion Play, too, this Occidental Nativity has a young school-teacher for the Virgin Mary, while her father takes the part of Joseph. Like it, also, the characters are all drawn from the busy, everyday village life. The Wise-men are a former postmaster, the keeper of the general store, a master builder, and a farmer. One of the shepherds is a member of the state legislature, while the others are young men from the surrounding farms. The angels are village children and women from all the various walks of life. Housewives, teachers, and housemaids participate in this beautiful example of democracy, while, in proof of the truly American spirit of the production, every creed and many nationalities unselfconsciously mingle in the great annual festival.

It is a bare little hall to which people are drawn from great distances to mingle with the townsfolk and spectators from the countryside and the surrounding towns. The crude simplicity of it is strangely in keeping with the primitive character of the production. The audience assembles quietly as if entering a church, and if they talk together it is in low tones.

Then comes the sound of carol singing from behind the scenes, softly at first, then louder and louder in processional effect until the audience joins in. *Once in Royal David's City* is followed by *As Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*, and as the people sing, there is a glow on their faces, as if *Peace on earth: Good will to men* had for a night at least become reality. The song having ceased, a minister reads the story of the Nativity. A soloist then sings *Silent Night*, which is taken up and repeated by the invisible chorus. As the last sounds die away the house goes dark except for the flickerings of a candle here and there. The curtain slowly rises upon the Annunciation, the first of an immortal series of scenes throughout which not a word is spoken, the action being motivated by familiar passages from Hayden's *Holy Night*, Handel's *Messiah* and Handel's *Largo* played upon a quaint old reed organ.

As Mary kneels by night beneath a starry sky, the Angel Gabriel appears, and the dazzling radiance of his robes shines about her as he bids her "Fear not, for thou hast found favor with God." The Angel appears again in the subsequent scene to bid the shepherds watching their flocks by night, "Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy."

Gabriel and his angelic company fade into the distance and the shepherds are left in wonder and amazement. The curtain descends, to rise upon the manger scene.

The stable is bare and dark save for a radiance which shines from the manger illuminating the face of Mary, the mother, and touching the figure of Joseph. The frosty breath comes from the nostrils of the beasts that share the humble abode. Onto the scene come the shepherds, who fall down in adoration. There come the Magi bearing gifts, which fade and turn to rubbish under their hands while even their presence is unnoticed. The curtain is lowered, and arises again to disclose a manger from which kings and shepherds have departed. While Joseph and Mary, exhausted from long vigil, bow over the radiant cradle, there extend over them the brooding wings of the Angel Gabriel, who has come to Joseph in a dream to bid him: "Arise, take the young child and his mother, and flee."

So the curtain descends, with men and women, wet-eyed, bestirring themselves and assuming again the everyday realities.

The Passion Play owes much of its artistic beauty to two women, a writer and an artist. It has been made possible year after year by the humble village folk no less than by the people of leisure. All working together have evolved a production which in its present form is at once a gift and inspiration to all of America, and just at a time when people everywhere, as never before, have begun to feel their way back to older and simpler faiths and to a closer integration of religion and life; just at a time when a great wave of social and spiritual energy is driving churches, large and small, compellingly, toward mass participation in active worship and toward the innate dignity and beauty of dramatized church ritual.

In the churches of New York, Washington, Philadelphia, as in those of almost any large city, may be found evidences of this new spirit. And in a city as large as Boston there are activities abroad akin to those in Pomfret. They are religious in nature, but while including the churches they go beyond old church limitations—as if there were a new social spirit, a new art, a new humanity, as well as a new religion abroad.

This is the way it came about: During the year, the Boston Community Service held a series of three dramatic schools in order to train volunteer community leaders in the "workshop" method of play production. It was subsequently discovered that more than thirty-five per cent of all of the large numbers who had enrolled for these schools had done so in order to participate more actively in their own church basement and church social center dramatic activities. Nor were these activities merely or mainly for entertainment purposes. There was a tendency everywhere to utilize all available technical skill in the dramatization of religious services and in the dramatic celebration of church holidays and holy days in which large numbers of people participated.

"Surely," said Mr. Joseph Lee, a public-spirited citizen of Boston, "such an impulse toward active mass worship has not made itself felt since the days of the medieval church, when the great human elements of awe, pathos and tragedy were so effectively added to the visual appeal in touching the hearts, kindling the imagination, and creating a unified group consciousness." And seeing the possibility of utilizing the impulse in the farthest-reaching manner, Mr. Lee, as president of the national Community Service organization, immediately organized a six weeks' school which would have for its specific purpose the creation of leadership of church dramatic groups.

Mr. George Pierce Baker, head of the dramatics department of Harvard, was the chairman of the general school committee, while technical experts from the Massachusetts Normal School of Arts, the Institute of Fine Arts, the Jesuit College, Boston University, and the Dramatics Department of the national Community Service, were on the faculty. Widely prominent churchmen, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish, gave lectures on the theory of religious dramatics. This does not signify that they were merely theorists. A number of them were engaged in local religious dramatic activities at the time.

Professor H. Augustine Smith, for instance, head of the department of religious education and social service of Boston

University, produced in one of the largest local theaters, while the school was in session, a religious pageant in which one hundred and fifty university students took part. It was the same pageant which Professor Smith had presented in the Imperial theater in Tokyo, Japan, last year. Its purpose was to visualize the application of the principles of peace and good will under the present social conditions. Professor Smith has studiedly inculcated into the students the responsibility of the church as a social center. "It is the business of the church," he believes, "to be as well managed as a theater or a movie house. It is the business also of the church," he says, "to win the active participation of the audience in the church program." This, he holds, comes most readily through dramatics with the full use of music as an accompaniment.

More than seventy players appeared in the student production with which the Boston religious dramatic school closed. Among the permanent results accomplished were the formation of a Bureau of Coaches, upon which newly interested churches may draw for leadership in their productions, and a permanent Boston-wide conference body, which will meet occasionally to consider better ways in which the drama may be used within the church. Inevitably, out of all these local activities among religious groups of Boston and vicinity, there is coming, perhaps not this year, nor even next, but inevitably there is coming a great annual religious festival which shall have no limitations of sect, creed or color, but which shall be all inclusive.

Roughly it has been estimated that more than a thousand churches in the country have lately turned their attention to dramatizing their services. It is not so remarkable that historic old Saint-Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, in New York, or the fashionable Saint George's, or the Calvary church, which is in the heart of the theatrical section of the city, should be doing these things. Nor that in a New Jersey suburb of New York city a theater "workshop" should have been organized, where members of the congregation gather regularly to work on settings, costumes, or rehearsals for religious plays. The conviction about this method of biblical presentation is abroad. But it *is* marvelous that the young teacher of a little mission school in the heart of the North Carolina mountains should be dramatizing Bible stories in lieu of the Sunday morning services which cannot be held regularly. And it *is* marvelous that the Zionist colony, in Illinois, who hold it to be worldly and wicked for a woman to wear a dress without a high collar, see nothing but religious beauty and solemnity in dramatizing from the pulpit.

There is no group so remote from the art centers of the country that they cannot use the drama effectively as a means of worship, if they but do so in simplicity and sincerity, and in a devotional spirit. That some modern "gospelers" are using the drama in sensational and ill-chosen ways, is unfortunate, but any one who has witnessed the touching beauty and eloquence of such a production as that in Pomfret, or as hundreds of others which are being held to commemorate Christmas, Easter, and the other great religious holidays, can but agree with the great dramatic expert whose advice to every church is:

"Don't fail to put on at least one pageant."

The Christmas Message

By Marguerite Skidmore

A Christmas Program for the church school which combines recitations and song with the modern feature of the pageant

PART I. God's Gift to Us—Jesus.

Part II. Jesus' Gift of Love and Joy Exemplified in the Happy Children of Our Christian Land.

Part III. Our Gratitude Expressed in Gifts.

Setting: A large fir tree flanks each side of the platform. A large electric star is suspended over the platform just above the manger. Hay in the manger, cornstalks, halter, and pile of meal bags give realistic touch.

As the school assembles, the organ is playing *The March of the Magi Kings* or Christmas carols. When the school is entirely assembled and seated, the pastor gives a few words of greeting and invokes divine blessing, concluding by repeating prayerfully the last verse of *O Little Town of Bethlehem:*

"O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend on us, we pray,
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today."

In this the entire school should reverently join (the words should have been practiced in unison).

"Today" is the cue for the singing as a solo of the first verse of *O Little Town of Bethlehem.* As this verse is being sung the lights are turned out and the star is lighted. At the first words of the second verse, "For Christ is born of Mary," curtain is drawn (or screen removed if curtain cannot be arranged) disclosing Mary (clothed in soft white cheesecloth with veil of same over her head) with arm resting on the manger and eyes intent upon it. She is seated on a pile of meal bags. "Peace to men on earth" (the end of the second verse) is the cue for a young boy of about fourteen to begin reading Luke 2. 8-9. As the verses are read, three shepherds (clad in tunics of different colors and animal skins and carrying crooks) appear at right front of church. When the boy finishes the words, "And the angel said unto them," a young girl (clothed in white cheesecloth robe and angel wings) appears in the choir above the platform and with arms raised in attitude of benediction continues the words: "Fear not . . . lying in a manger." Then the reader continues: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying" . . . (At this point a chorus of six or eight young women concealed from the audience sing, *All Glory to God,* found in *American 4-Music Reader.*) When the angel voices cease, the angel disappears and the boy continues the Scripture: "And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." (As these words are being read, the shepherds, who have held an awe-stricken attitude, ascend the platform and take their places in triangular formation, eyes on Mary and the manger.)

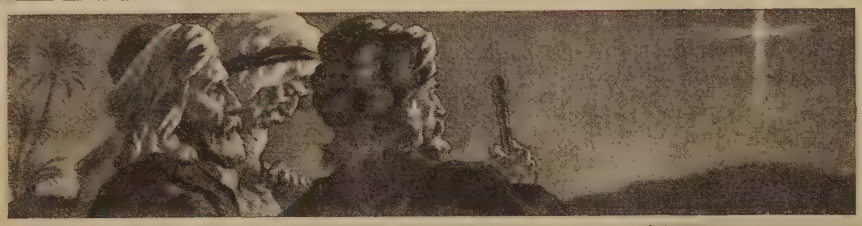
At this point a chorus of at least twenty boys and twenty girls (boys dressed as choir boys and girls clad in white cheesecloth robes, hair flowing and bound with gilt cord across the forehead) singing, *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,* enter from opposite sides, front of church, and pass slowly in single file down the aisles of the church, meeting at the rear and forming a double line returning to the front, then separating and exiting right and left as they entered. As the chorus of young voices ceases, the strains of deeper voices come from the vestibule. These are the voices of three youths taking the part of the three kings singing, *We Three Kings of Orient Are.* They sing only the first verse and chorus. The singing begins softly as coming from a distance and increases in volume as the three enter the rear of the church on the first words of the chorus. The word "Light" is the signal for a girl of about sixteen with a clear, ringing voice to begin reciting *The Three Kings,* by Longfellow. While this is being recited, the three kings slowly pass down the center aisle bearing their gifts (small incense burner, gold jewel case and lacquer box serve the purpose) and gauging their time so that they ascend the platform on the words, "And the three Kings rode through the gate and the guard." At the words, "They laid their

offerings at his feet," the kings bow low and kneel, forming a triangular group at the left of the platform. At the cue words "David's throne" a chorus of children's voices sing the first two verses of *There's a Song in the Air*. Omit third verse. The entire school joins in the fourth verse. The increased volume and tone should give to this fourth verse a note of real triumph which concludes Part I. Curtain is drawn and the lights turned on, though the star is left gleaming over the manger throughout the program.

The superintendent announces theme of Part II: *Jesus' Gift of Love and Joy Exemplified in the Happy Children of Our Christian Land.* This part of the program need not be long but should aim to give every beginner and primary child an opportunity to take part in group or singly. Care should be taken to select songs and recitations which breathe the Christmas spirit of love and kindness toward all of God's creatures, and under no circumstances should the theme of Santa Claus be introduced. No more beautiful songs can be found than *Silent Night* and *Away in a Manger, No Crib for a Bed.*

At the end of Part II the superintendent gives a short talk contrasting the childhood (as the visitors have seen it in the participation in the program) of the happy children in our Christian land with that of children where the "Jesus Way" has not been taught. He then announces the topic of Part III, *Our Gift of Gratitude*, in which all are invited to share. The talk of the superintendent will vary according as the school may have decided to make gifts to local institutions or foreign lands. In some schools, as in the case of the school in which this program was presented, each class makes an individual gift presented in a unique manner.

This program was planned with the thought of inspiring the Christian spirit of giving to those less fortunate. The results were entirely satisfactory. On the evening the program was given an offering of $1,380 was received, besides several hundred dollars in kind. This particular school sent a portion of its gifts to a local institution, "The Five Points Mission," and so used as an introduction to Part III the dialogue, *Polyanna of the Five Points Mission*, which appeared in the December, 1921, number of THE CHURCH SCHOOL.



The Three Kings

By Henry W. Longfellow

THREE kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Balthazar;
Three Wise-men out of the East were they,
And they traveled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became as white mist in the atmosphere;
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;
Their robes were of crimson silk, with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and turbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night over hills and dells.
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at the wayside wells.

"Of the child that is born," said Balthazar,
"Good people, I pray you, tell us the news,
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews."

And the people answered, "You ask in vain;
We know of no king but Herod the Great!"
They thought the Wise-men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain
Like riders in haste who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise-men and questioned them;
And said, "Go down unto Bethlehem
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away, and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn;
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The City of David where Christ was born.

And the Three kings rode through gate and guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were barred,
And only the lights in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,
The little child in the manger lay
The Child that would be King one day
Of a kingdom not human, but divine.

His mother, Mary of Nazareth,
Sat watching beside his place of rest;
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:
The gold was their tribute to a King;
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone;
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

Christmas in the Primary Department

By Lucy Stock Chapin

THE one season of all the year dearest to little children is Christmas. It means days of joyous anticipation, dreams of Santa Claus and bulging stockings and laden trees. It means gazing with delight at the display in store windows and wandering in bewildered admiration through the toy departments. It means secrets and mysterious packages and the counting of the days until Christmas really comes. It means listening with wonder to the stories of the shepherds and the Wise-men and the singing of Christmas carols. Yes, it means all of these things to the average child, and yet if there is nothing more the very heart of Christmas has been left out. It lacks the spirit of Christmas, which is "to make others happy."

Ever since God made his great gift to the world and Wise-men brought their gifts to the Christ-child, the world has been giving. We load the children with gifts until they must feel that *getting* instead of *giving* is the thought of Christmas. Although they, too, are encouraged to give, in our haste and multiplicity of duties at the holiday season we are apt to neglect to provide for them the experience of the greatest joy of all—that of making others happy. As parents and teachers can we afford to be so busy with our own Christmas preparations that we neglect to help the children with theirs? Our own Christmas will be happier if we help the children to catch the spirit of Christmas. "Christmas is not a time for selfish enjoyment—if there is ever any real enjoyment where selfishness is present. It is above all the season of thoughtfulness for others, of giving, of love and kindness, and of the play of social feelings." So let us help the children to enter into the Christmas spirit and experience the blessedness of giving.

But the giving should be an expression of love for the Christ-child and gratitude to the heavenly Father for his goodness in giving him to the world. If the child has received the right instruction and love has awakened in his heart, the natural response comes in the desire to share with others—to make them happy at this happiest season of the year.

This is our aim for the children, but while we are emphasizing this planning for the happiness of others and are helping the children in the making of their gifts, let us remember that there is also a perfectly legitimate joy in receiving. If a gift is an expression of thoughtfulness and love, it is quite in keeping with our teachings that the children should receive such manifestation of our love for them and our desire to give them happiness. So for the children the Christmas joy comes both in the giving and in the receiving.

In the church school there are four ways of emphasizing the Christmas message and helping to secure the right attitude and response, namely, through the teaching of the Christmas lesson, by means of a well planned session program or service of worship, by a special Christmas service with the entire school and church and by the Christmas party or entertainment.

Through the teaching of the Christmas lesson in the three grades of the Primary Department our desire is to lead the child to a deep, tender love for the Christ-child and to respond with thanks and praise to the heavenly Father and the impulse to express his love in sacrifice and kindness to others.

Such a Happy Time!

By Nancy Byrd Turner

Holly's in the window
And a candle on the sill;
Snow is in the meadow
And a star above the hill.

We sing beside the fire,
And the far bells chime.
O, every year our Christmas
Is such a happy time!

The surest way to bring Jesus to the little child and make him near and dear is by telling and retelling the stories of the Baby in the manger and the visit of the Wise-men. The children never tire of these stories, and we need not be afraid of telling them too often, for they will never lose their charm. The shepherds sought the Child in haste and returned, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." The Wise-men "fell down and worshiped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." And if right teaching and right experiences are provided for the children, they too will be drawn to the Christ-child and the close of the Christmas season will find them reverent and worshipful.

But the teaching of the Christmas lesson is but one means of emphasizing the truth. Quite as important are the impressions received through the service of worship not only on Christmas Sunday, but on several Sundays preceding Christmas.

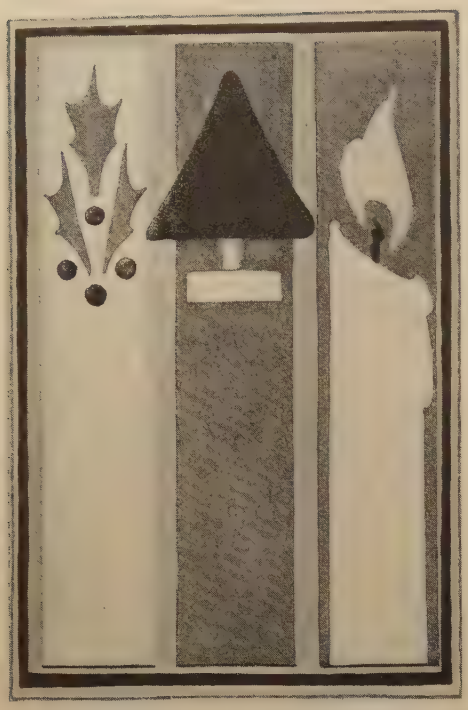
At the very beginning of the Christmas preparations a part of the story of the events clustering about the birth of Jesus may be told and each Sunday repeated and added to. The children will be taught to repeat or sing the memory verse, "He loved us, and sent his Son." Other songs, some new and some old, will be sung, not at all in the nature of a rehearsal but always as worship and to foster the Christmas spirit.

All during the month of December the children should be living in happy anticipation of the coming of Christmas. This is the teacher's opportunity. The Christmas stories should be told with feeling and a purpose in mind; songs should be explained and attractively taught; such prayers should be formulated and learned as will bring the children close to the Father and fill their hearts with love and gratitude; instruction should be given concerning the spirit of giving and plans should be made for the children to celebrate Christmas in some act of service. Under guidance let them decide what they will do for others—make scrapbooks and puzzles for children in the hospital, bring gifts of toys and clothing for children less fortunate than themselves, trim a Christmas tree for a mission school, make gifts for shut-ins—and then help them in the carrying out of their plans. As the children meet during the week to make gifts, stories may be told—stories of other children and of Christmas in other lands—to hold their interest and spur them on in their efforts to make others happy. Then when Christmas Sunday comes the children will be ready for it and will enter into the service in the attitude of love and thanksgiving and worship.

If the service on Christmas Sunday is held in the department room it should be simple and appropriate. If a special service of the entire school is provided, it too should be simple and worshipful and an appropriate celebration of the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem.

A special service for the entire school and church seems almost a necessity to augment and strengthen the impressions of Christmas. Together the little children, the older boys and girls and the fathers and mothers worship the new-born King, and together they express their love in giving. The most beautiful service—pageant, preaching, carol singing, whatever it is—is the one which culminates in the giving. It has long been the custom in one church to have what is known as "the manger service," in which the school and church unite. The church-school session precedes the church service. At the close of the school session and while the organ voluntary is being played the children of the three elementary grades march into the church auditorium and deposit their gifts in a large manger which stands in front of the pulpit. A brief service is held while the children stand about the manger. Prayer is offered and carols sung and the

(Continued on page 135)



Bookmarks are simple and attractive gifts and are not too difficult for little fingers to make. Directions for making the three shown above will be found in the opposite column.

The Christmas tree in its tub may be used as a design for Christmas cards or book covers. It would make an attractive cover for a group of Christmas stories.

Gifts for Children to Make

PRACTICAL suggestions and helps with patterns of articles to be made are always in demand by teachers in the elementary departments. On this page are shown various gifts and on the opposite page will be found patterns which may be traced and applied. To make the various articles the following directions may prove helpful.

At the left are shown three bookmarks. The one with the holly design will be effective if cut from white paper pasted on a background of red. Trace the patterns of leaves and berries from opposite page, transfer to bookmark and color.

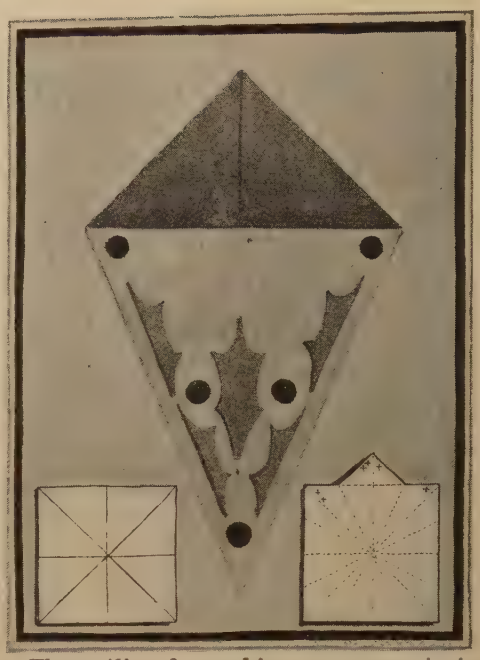
For the Christmas tree bookmark cut the tree from green paper and paste it on a strip of red, making the base of the tree brown.

For the candle bookmark trace the outline of the candle and transfer it on white water-color paper. Cut out and paste it on a strip of red modeling board or cover paper. Trace the wick and transfer on gray, blue, or black paper. Make the flame of yellow or orange.

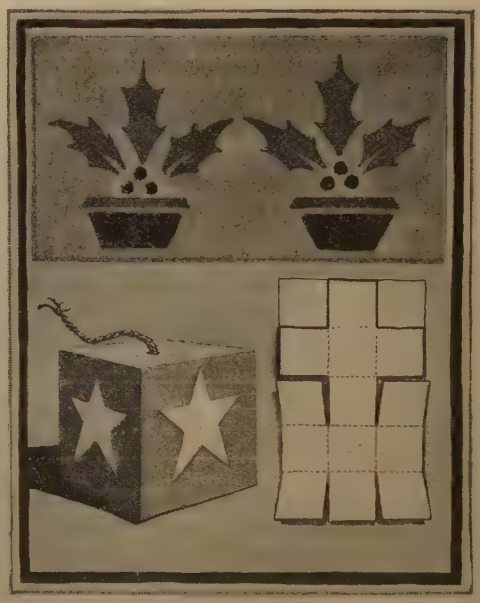
To make the basket, trace the pattern and transfer on a piece of green modelling paper or cover paper folded across dotted line c-d so that the lower piece measures about 2⅝ inches and the top piece or handle 9⅜ inches. This gives the complete handle. Cut out along the edges and cut through the vertical lines on the inside of the basket. Trace the section 1-2 and 3-4. Transfer four times on heavy white paper and cut out, thus making the strips to weave through the slits made in the basket. After these are woven, paste down on the reverse edges. Paste the end of the handle to the opposite side of the basket. Complete by pasting the two edges together.

Transfer the outline of the apple as many times as need be on water-color paper and paint with water colors or crayons to resemble apples. Cut the name strips at different positions and reverse the apples to give a more natural effect to the grouping. The basket may serve several

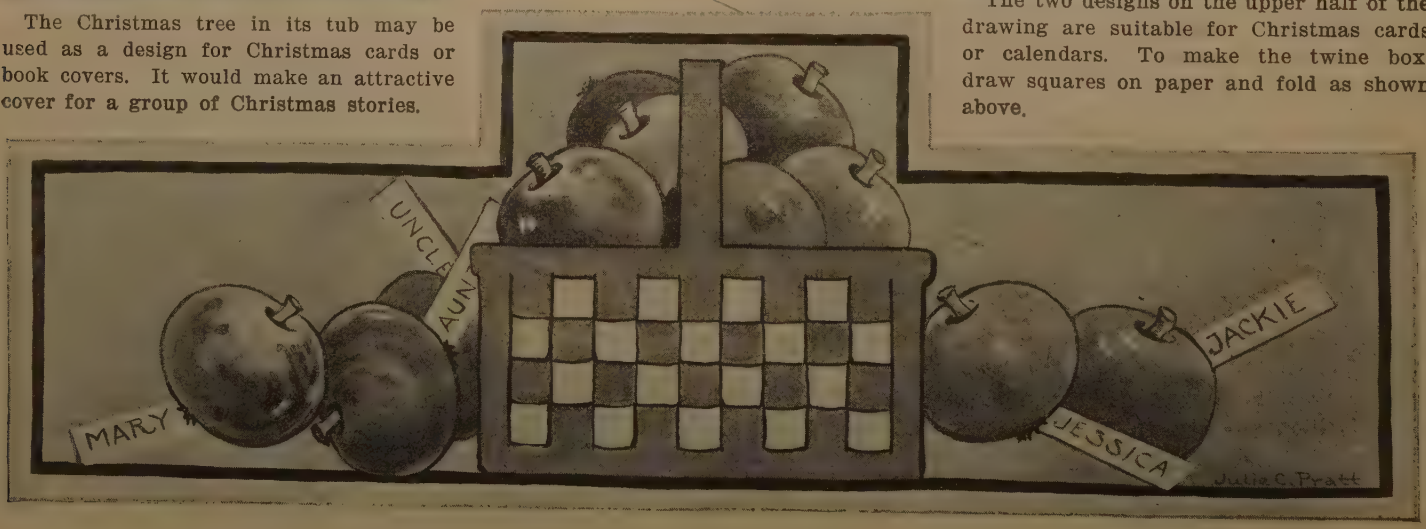
(Continued on page 136)

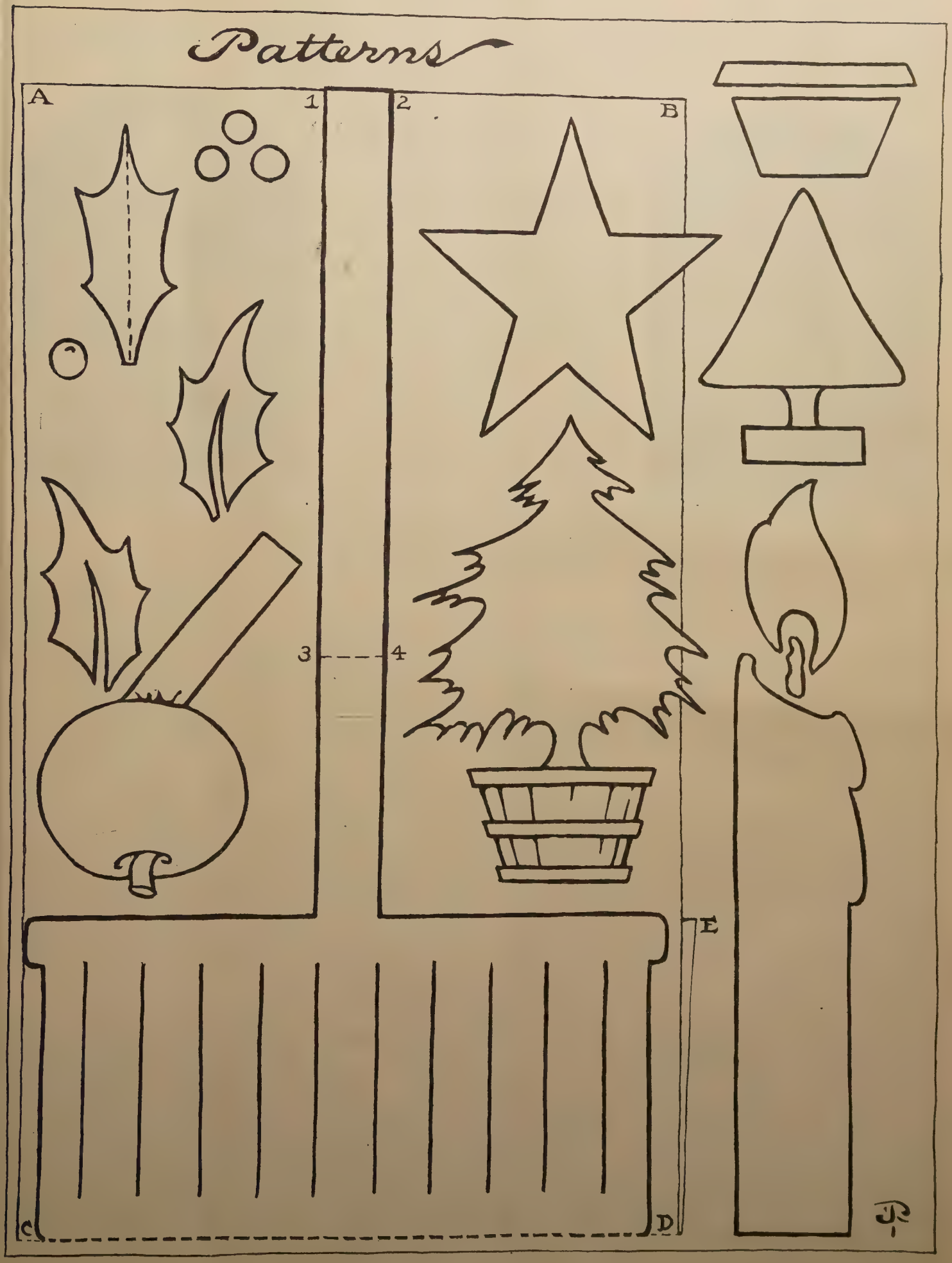


The outline for making a cornucopia is simple and easily followed. Trace the patterns of leaves and berries found on opposite page, transfer them to the cornucopia as shown in the design and color appropriately.



The two designs on the upper half of the drawing are suitable for Christmas cards or calendars. To make the twine box, draw squares on paper and fold as shown above.




Patterns
A
1
2
B
3
4
E
C
D

Keeping Christmas with Little Children

By
Jessie Eleanor Moore

"Christ is reborn with every child and Christmas is His Festival. Come, let us keep it with our children."

Artist, Feuerstein *The Holy Family*

IN the church school the days before Christmas must be spent in the delight of anticipation. The Christmas spirit will not spring to life full grown on Christmas Sunday. It grows slowly during days of preparation. There must be time to sit, in imagination, with the shepherds in the darkness among the quiet, woolly sheep, to listen to the angels' song, to peep into the manger with round-eyed wonder, to ride across the hot sands, high up on the swaying, wobbly camels to bring gifts to the Babe of Bethlehem. Certain of the Christmas carols which belong to childhood everywhere must be sung and sung again, just for the pure joy of it. Certain products of the old masters must be so impressed upon the consciousness, by means of constant association during these days, that they will never fade. Plans must be laid and carried out for making some one else happy, the deepest joy of all. The youngest class must be made conscious of the larger family of the church school to which they belong by joining with them in some of the plans and so learn the magic of together.

The time element is most important in developing the Christmas spirit. As the Thanksgiving festival is significant in the religious life of young children it must not be omitted. Every minute of the four Sundays between the two festivals is therefore necessary for the Christmas teaching. If preparations for the day are to mean anything to little children, especially to those who are hearing the Christmas story for the first time, it must be told before Christmas Sunday. Tell the manger story as early in the month as possible, follow it on the next Sunday with the story of the Wise-men and then plan to retell both on Christmas Sunday. This is the plan suggested in the International Graded Lessons, Beginners' Course.

These two stories may well be introduced by a story of giving or sharing, thus touching the heart of the meaning of the festival at the very beginning. Children love to linger amid the joys of this never to be forgotten day; so the Sunday after Christmas may be used for retelling Christmas stories with perhaps a new story showing the happiness which comes through sharing. Five Sundays is very little time at best; so do not rob the children of these precious moments by filling the time with rehearsals.

Stories for Telling

The story of all stories, *The Baby Jesus in the Manger*, should be told early in the month and followed on the next Sunday by the story of the Wise-men. Some teachers precede these with the story of the Annunciation. This is an excellent story for little children who delight in sharing, in the imagination, Mary's secret of the coming of her Baby. Whether you are using the course or not read this and the other Christmas stories as Miss Frances Weld Danielson tells them in *The Little Child and the Heavenly Father*, International Graded Lessons, Beginners' Course. These stories should be introduced, on a Sunday previous, by a story of giving. The course mentioned above suggests *The Widow's Mite*. Other stories which may be told are: *The Queer Little Baker Man; An Inventory*, by Anna Pettit Broomel, found in *The Children's Story Garden; What Happened to the Birthday Cake*, by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, found in *The Mayflower* and *Picture Story Paper*. The first of these makes a very good connecting link with the Thanksgiving season.

The Christmas thought of sharing should be prolonged to the Sunday after Christmas. For this purpose use: *The Toy Party*, by Edna Dean Baker, found in *The Beginners' Book in Religion*, which is a story of sharing toys; or use some of the stories given in the children's folders of the International Graded Lessons, Beginners' Course, as: *The Day After Christmas; The Birds' Christmas Tree*. This last will suggest the after-Christmas project of placing the discarded tree out-of-doors, laden with food for the birds.

Madonna and Child Artist, Goodall

The teaching period need not be limited to the Sunday hour. Even such an event as a Thanksgiving party may be used to introduce the Christmas thought of sharing.

Old Man Rabbit's Thanksgiving Dinner, by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, found in *For the Story Teller*, is delightfully humorous enough to charm at a week-day party, is a story of Thanksgiving and still contains the truth of sharing. Refer to this story on the following Sunday and tell another story of sharing, thus strengthening the impression, and the children will be all the more ready for the introduction of the Christmas giving project. If the children meet on any week day during December they will probably ask for the retelling of the stories of the Christmas Baby. Add to these such stories as: *The Three Little Christmas Trees That Grew on a Hill*, found in *The Story Teller's Book*, by O'Grady and Throop; *Golden Cobwebs*, found in *The Children's Book of Christmas Stories*, by Asa Don Dickinson.

Pictures

The children will be all aglow with anticipation and it is right that they should be. It is legitimate to spend much time during these Sundays in talking about the delights of Christmas, about trips to the toy shops and what may be seen there, about family customs on Christmas Day, about hanging up stockings and all the other customs dear to a child's heart. To this end place about the room pictures of Christmas trees, children hanging up stockings, children gathering Christmas greens and family scenes of Christmas

jollity. These may be cut from magazines and mounted for the purpose. Be sure that always with these pictures are hung pictures of the Christmas story so that the connection will be made between the Christmas good times and the reason for them. Many a home does not lead the child mind and heart any farther than Santa Claus. The church school should do better.

This is the season when children should learn to know and love some of the Madonnas of the old masters. One of these may be carefully chosen and well placed in a prominent position, there to remain during the month of December. Of course, hang it low enough so that chubby fingers may pat the baby and say, "Isn't he cunning?" but at the same time do not hang it amid the jumble of pictures just mentioned. Place it a little apart or a little above the others. We Protestants are apt to be lacking in reverence toward such things because of fear of imitating the attitude of the Roman Church.

For the central Christmas picture use the bust of the *Sistine Madonna* or of Bodenhausen's *Madonna and Child*. Little children cannot understand why Mary appears to stand upon nothing but clouds in the latter if the whole picture is used, nor can they see the significance of the other figures in the former. Carl Muller's *Holy Night or* Feuerstein's *Holy Night* may be used, but Lerolle's *Arrival of the Shepherds* is preeminently the child's picture because of the absence of the halo and the natural setting. After once experiencing the delight of discovering with the children the cow lying down and the donkey on the dark corner you will never use any other. To be very practical, Jessie Wilcox Smith's *Madonna* and the one popularly known as the *Modern Madonna* are both better for little children than are many of those by the old masters.

Songs

Little children cannot learn many songs. One song, telling the Christmas story, is all that can be expected of beginners. Occasionally a second one may be added by making use of one taught in the week-day kindergarten if many of the children attend the same one. Luther's *Cradle Hymn* is the classic, but in our attempt to choose simpler and simpler songs for beginners it is quite customary to leave this for the Primary Department and use *Long, Long Ago on Christmas Day*, from *Object Lessons for the Cradle Roll*, by Frances Weld Danielson. The first verse of this may be presented at the time of the telling of the manger story. It is so simple that it will need no explanation if sung to the children immediately after the story. The second verse may be used on the Sunday following after the story of the Wise-men is told. Two charmingly simple songs will be found in *Songs for the Little Child* by Clara Belle Baker, *The Child Jesus* and *A Christmas Lullaby*. The first verse of *Once a Little Baby Lay* by Emilie Poulsson is simple enough for beginners. Her Christmas hymn, beginning, "'Twas in a lowly stable," with music by Eleanor Smith, may be sung to the children even if not selected as their song. The story is simply told and the mention of the animals pleases the children, but it is not complete unless all four verses are used, which is not usually a wise thing to do with the tiny people.

We are not careful enough to acquaint our children with the best in music. Even though the words of *Holy Night* are beyond our beginners the music may be used, the children recognizing that it tells the story of the Baby Jesus. These strains used each Sunday during December as quiet music at the opening of the session and before the telling of the stories induce an atmosphere of reverence and quiet and create a lasting impression.

A rollicking, jolly song of Christmas is not out of place if used when playing or talking about the delights of toys and trees. Such a one may be found in *First Year Music* by Hollis Dann. It begins:

"Clap your hands in merry cheer,
Christmas Day is almost here,"

and the chorus is a simple "Tra-la-la." The children will sing it at a single hearing. Such a song is merely incidental and should not require time.

Rhymes

All children love a jingle. Stories may be told in rhyme as well as in prose. Here is an opportunity to use the words of some of the Christmas songs which the children cannot learn. Search through books of children's poetry and from time to time use a verse or two at the psychological moment in the circle talk. If the children say "Say it again" they have bestowed upon it their highest praise.

Play

There is not space here to go into the theory of expression in play, but a little child must act out to understand. The Gradgrinds who keep their children wearily repeating the words of a carol so that it may be perfectly learned to please an adult audience should be banished from Beginners' Departments, especially at Christmas time. The conversation early in December quite naturally turns to the subject of "What I want for Christmas." The teacher has it thrust upon her whether she will or no. Why not show in pantomime what one wishes for Christmas? This demands thinking and ingenuity both to act out and to guess. It gives the activity which is so essential if wriggles are not to become prevalent in the class. What better introduction could the Christmas story have than this? "Now I will tell you the story of how we came to have Christmas. Long ago there were no Christmas trees, little children did not hang up their stockings, no one gave presents. This is the story of the very first Christmas."

Is there an undue prominence given to Santa Claus during this play and conversation period during the first Sundays? There is little useless material which comes to the skillful teacher's net as she conducts a circle talk and even this subject may be used to further the central idea of Christmas. In the midst of a chorus of wonderful tales of throwing letters up the chimney, of seeing tracks in the snow, of hearing reindeer on the roof, this skillful teacher asks quite abruptly, "Would you like to be a Santa Claus?" Consternation and incredulity are written upon some faces, those whose acquaintance with the old saint has been made by unwise parents who have made him too vivid and who have laid great stress on the favors bestowed upon good children. Lively interest is in the faces of all. "This is the way you do it," the teacher continues. "You know any one who makes some one else happy at Christmas time is a Santa Claus. If you give your mother a present then you are a Santa Claus. Can you think of any one whom we can make happy?"

If the children have entered upon service projects before and established relations of friendliness with other less fortunate children they will be quite capable of making good suggestions. The teacher should be ready with others. These may be discussed and the plans outlined. In order to make this discussion concrete it is well to have samples of gifts at hand—a scrapbook if the hospital near-by is suggested—a few tree trimmings if the gift of a tree is mentioned. If a collection of toys for a children's home is suggested let the teachers be quick to say what they will bring on the following Sunday. Do not leave the subject until the project is launched.

Handwork

The real heart of the Christmas message will come to the children only as they enter into such a plan for making some one else happy. Stories and carols are mere background and of little value without such activity. As little fingers work, the impression is deepened and the real meaning of Christmas is apprehended. For this reason it is quite legitimate to carry on the actual handwork connected with such a project during the Sunday session if it is impossible to gather the children for it on any week day. The best time is immediately at the opening of the session. With this plan, each child may get to work on his arrival, thus saving many minutes. After the work is cleared away the session may move on without interruption. This part of the program should be made a teaching period and not merely a factory for the accomplishment of a certain piece of work. The teacher, if she sits down with the children, may guide conversation

(Continued on page 142)

Do You Tell It This Way?

Bible Stories for Very Little Children

By Edna Applegate

Jesus Stilling the Storm[1]

ONE evening Jesus started across the lake in a boat. His friends were with him.

After a while it began to grow dark.

Jesus was very tired. He lay his head on a pillow. Soon he was fast asleep.

After a while the wind began to blow.

The waves began to roll.

The boat began to toss.

The water began to splash.

The men were afraid the boat would upset. But Jesus slept on. He was very tired.

Soon the wind blew harder and harder!

The waves rolled higher and higher!

The boat tossed faster and faster!

The water splashed more and more!

The men were afraid they would all be drowned! So they hurried to Jesus. They woke him. They cried to him,

"Help us!

We will drown!

Do you not care if we drown?"

Jesus talked to his friends. What do you think he said to them? I think he said,

"Why are you afraid?

Do you not trust me to take care of you?"

Jesus talked to the wind and the water. What do you think he said to them? I think he said,

"Be very still."

The wind stopped blowing.

The waves stopped rolling.

The boat stopped tossing.

The water stopped splashing.

Everything was very, very still.

Mark 4. 35-41.

[1]Copyright, 1922, by Edna Applegate.

The First Christmas[1]

IT was a beautiful night. The sky was very blue. The stars were very bright. One star was larger and brighter than all the rest. It hung low over a little barn in the town of Bethlehem.

There were no cows in the barn.

There were no sheep in the barn.

Yet the barn was not empty.

Over in the corner were Joseph and Mary. They had come a long, long way to the town of Bethlehem. They were very tired and sleepy. They could find no place to stay all night. Every house was full! At last they found this little barn. Now they were making a bed of clean, sweet hay.

From the pastures near-by came the "Moo! Moo!" of the cows. From the pastures near-by came the "Tinkle! Tinkle!" of the little bells on the sheep.

It was a beautiful night. The sky was very blue. The stars were very bright. One star was larger and brighter than all the rest. It hung low over a little barn in the town of Bethlehem.

Something wonderful happened that beautiful night! It happened in the little barn in the town of Bethlehem! Can you guess what it was?

A tiny baby boy came to live with Joseph and Mary! He was such a dear, sweet baby! Joseph and Mary were very proud of him. They wrapped him all cozy and warm. They held him close in their arms. Then they laid him in the manger on the clean, sweet hay.

Soon he was fast asleep.

From the pastures near by came the "Moo! Moo!" of the cows. From the pastures near-by came the "Tinkle! Tinkle!" of the little bells on the sheep.

But the baby boy slept on.

Can you guess who this tiny baby boy was? He was Jesus, the very one we love the most!

His birthday is coming soon.

We call it Christmas!

Luke 2.

[1]Copyright, 1922, by Edna Applegate.

Peace on Earth

A Story for Little Children

By Julia Logan Archibald

SUZANNE'S little feet were heavy, but her heart was light. All day long she had been running errands, hither and yon, in and out, "upstairs and down stairs, and in my lady's chamber." Now it was dark and the street lamps were lighted, and she was hurrying on her last errand for the night. It was a happy, happy errand. For a month she had hardly noticed the out of doors, and now the softly falling snow and the cold clean air were a delight.

Suzanne had come near to losing the best-beloved of all the world—her mother. And now the struggle was over, the dark hours were gone, and her mother was going to get well. That afternoon the crisis had passed, she had sunk into a deep natural sleep, and the doctor said she would waken in a few hours, knowing Suzanne and perhaps she would be a little hungry.

So that was the errand—to find just the kind of broth the doctor thought would be the best nourishment for her at first. Oh, what fun! Just the thought of her mother's opening her eyes, and smiling at Suzanne in the old dear way, lent wings to the little girl's weary feet. The thought of that moment had put faith into her prayers and given strength to her little hands during the days when all the world was darkened by her mother's pain.

As she hurried along everywhere were people with their arms full of packages and their lips full of laughter. And it seemed that every window, in every house, in every block was a rectangle of yellow light. What were they all so busy about—these people who had no sick mothers needing a certain kind of broth? You see she hadn't been able to go to school for so long she hadn't even thought about the day of the week or the day of the month.

She found the drug-store the doctor had told her about, and then, as she was going along, she came to a church from whose windows shone a soft flickering light. Surely it was not Sunday. Then, as she was just under one of the windows, she saw that the light came from—what do you think? Yes, a lovely big Christmas tree all covered with candles, white and blue, and shimmering silver tinsel, like festoons of captured moonlight.

There she is in the picture standing still with surprise and delight. Christmas! There it was, the sweetest story ever told in the world, the message of love! Suzanne thought what a wonderful Christmas present had come to her—light after darkness, peace after woe. She loved toys and pretty things as much as other little girls, but she did not think of them now. Something so much bigger was in her heart. Do you know what it was? It was Thankfulness, and it made everything about her shine with happiness.

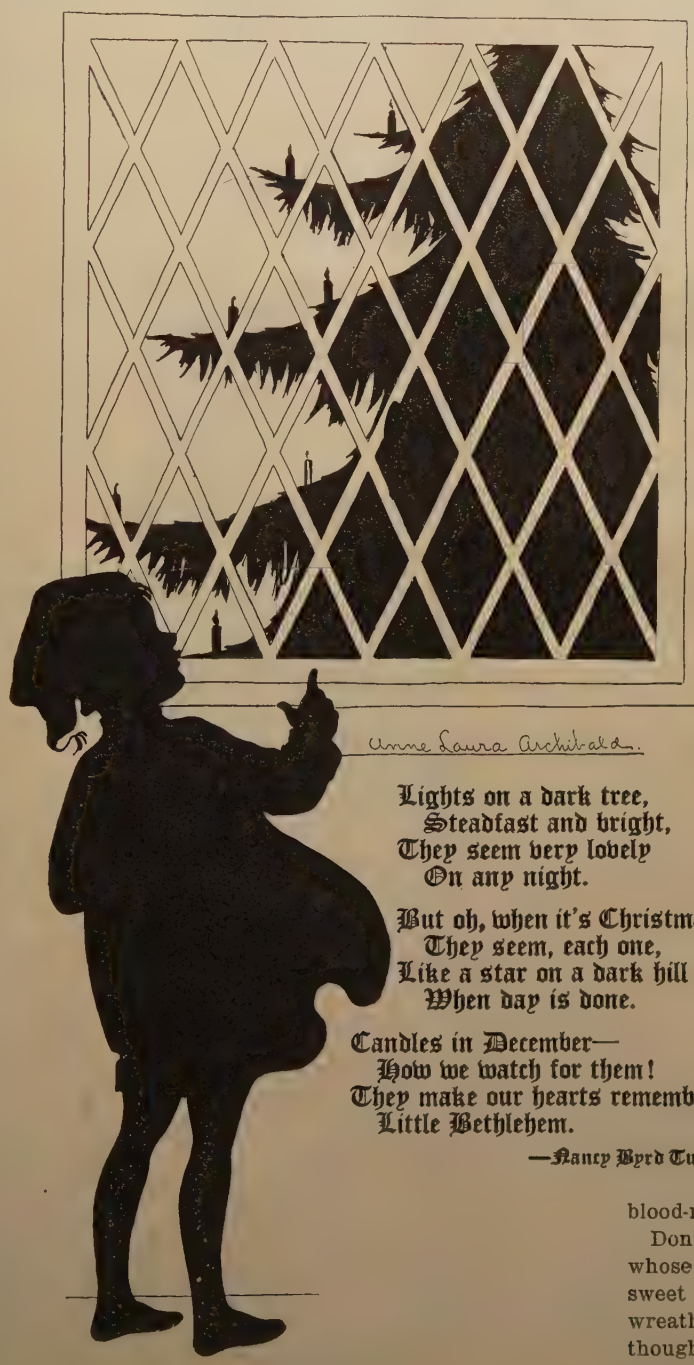
She could not remember ever having loved any other Christmas so much, and five minutes before she had not thought of it. Usually she and her mother planned and prepared for weeks ahead, and now all at once she understood what Christmas meant as she never had before. There wouldn't be any presents or goodies this year, but oh, she didn't care!

She skipped along home as light as a snowflake, and just before she got there she began skipping faster than ever. She had thought of something. She thought about her mother opening her smiling eyes this Christmas Eve and what must be the first thing they would see.

After the little girl had made ready what was needed for the sick room, she ran to her own room where her little metal elephant-bank sat on her dresser guarding the royal pennies. It felt heavy and sounded full, and when she held it upside down, shaking it vigorously, it began to give up some of its treasure through the little hole in the canopy on its back. Finally her small hand was almost full and she went skipping out into the snowy street again. At the store at the corner she found a lovely fresh wreath of holly, and this was what she had decided to place where her mother would see it the first thing when she opened her eyes.

She had often told Suzanne how, in the olden days, the people gathered branches of holly, or holy-tree, to deck the temples, and how, in some countries, it is called Christ's thorn because it puts forth its blood-red berries at Christmas time.

Don't you know that was a happy mother whose eyes rested that night on such a sweet little daughter, and on the holy-wreath which gave her, for her first thought, the Christmas message, "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men."



Lights on a dark tree,
Steadfast and bright,
They seem very lovely
On any night.

But oh, when it's Christmas,
They seem, each one,
Like a star on a dark hill
When day is done.

Candles in December—
How we watch for them!
They make our hearts remember
Little Bethlehem.

—Nancy Byrd Turner

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Redeeming the Children

(Continued from page 115)

when these dangers are eliminated. So in one of the large orphanages, after the "Mother" had made her rounds for the night and had assured herself that all was well, some of the children would invariably creep out of bed and softly but tightly close all doors and windows. For the sake of the health of the children it was necessary to give them a different attitude toward fresh air, and consequently the cots were moved out of doors. The summer in this environment wrought wonderful cures, mental as well as physical, and when winter came there was no longer a desire to close the windows at night. There has likewise been created a love for the "old swimming hole"—which is, for many of the children, an inlet on the Mediterranean, the Black Sea or the Sea of Marmora—and for the picnics and week-end tent parties at summer camps established by the Y. M. C. A.

Saving Life Not Enough

But the American Relief Workers are not content merely to preserve the lives and the health of the children. The problems of living wisely and of earning a livelihood must very soon be faced by the older ones. Habits of cleanliness and orderliness need to be inculcated. Consequently "clean up" squads have been organized, Boy Scouts police the grounds of many of the orphanages, assist the teachers who supervise the playgrounds and prevent the smaller children from wandering away and becoming lost. The older girls help with the housekeeping, cooking, mending and the care of the younger children. In some of the girls' orphanages each older girl is given a "little sister" for whom she is made responsible. All are encouraged to regard highly their tasks and the opportunities to which these will lead, that

"By toiling and trying we reach that land,
A bit with the head, a bit with the hand!
'Tis by climbing the steep hill, Work,
And keeping out of the wide street, Shirk."

Industrial Work

Every American visitor to the orphanages is impressed with the industrial training given the children. Dr. Henry Allen Tupper, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., made this statement upon his recent return from the Near East:

"I learned that three fourths of the children who have been saved by the Near East Relief in many parts of the field, are self-supporting and that they were being usefully developed for industrial service. They were supplied with raw material, tools, utensils and, added to the agricultural program, they were taught weaving, tailoring, carpentering, shoe-making, embroidering, sewing and other industries. The work produced was most excellent.

Some of the embroidering made by the young girls compared well with the work produced in certain parts of Europe and the carpentering of the boys showed great skill. This is looking toward the future and will develop not only self-respect and industry, but will go largely into the rehabilitation and development of the countries where these people are living."

Dr. Tupper's attitude on this great problem is that of all the denominational leaders throughout the entire country. The Denominational Boards as well as the International Sunday School Council of Religious Education have indorsed the appeal to the Sunday schools throughout the land. Most of them have set aside a special Near East Relief Day to be observed in all their schools and are earnestly urging that their people cooperate to the full extent of their ability with the Near East Relief Committee. This is without question today the greatest humanitarian project in which all the religious forces of America are joined.

Christmas in the Primary Department

(Continued from page 127)

children pass out. At the close of the church worship the entire audience rises and the people pass up the center aisle, deposit their gifts in the manger and return by the side aisles to their seats. It is a simple but very impressive service.

The Christmas service should always be worshipful and impressive. It is no time for the "speaking of pieces" and "showing off" the children. There is abundant material at hand with which to build an appropriate program. There are many beautiful pageants to be had and every year the religious magazines abound in material. One of the greatest treasures of the church is its Christmas hymns. They should be learned by the children until gradually they become a part of the store of memory treasures. Another rich store of material is found in the pictures of great artists. The Bible stories, hymns and pictures linked together make at any time a wonderful program and always hold the interest and deepen the impression of the meaning of Christmas. The children love these things and they should be used over and over, year after year, in different combinations.

One other opportunity is afforded of helping the children to keep Christmas and this is the Christmas party, or entertainment. No matter how much is done for the children in their homes, nothing ever takes the place of the church-school celebration. It provides for the social life of the children and adds greatly to their happiness. It is possible to maintain a proper balance in the celebration of Christmas, giving the children the pleasure of receiving from the church and at the same time helping them to find expression and joy in giving. The children may or may

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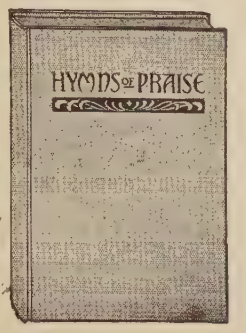

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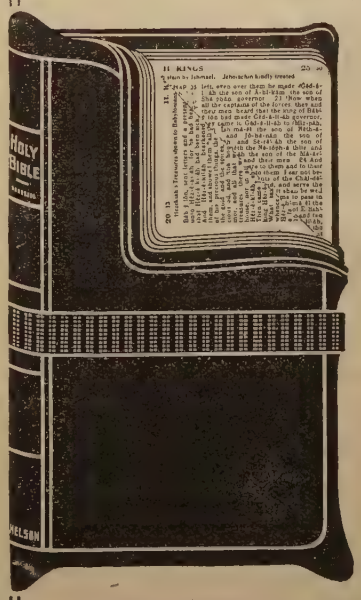

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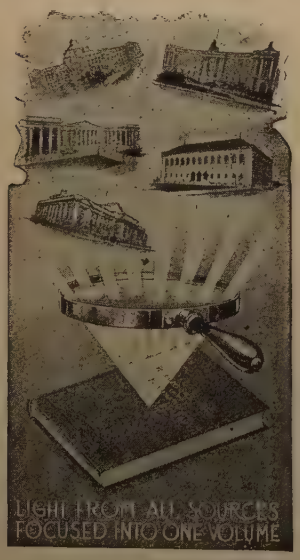

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Christmas in the Primary Department

not receive gifts from the school or church, as seems wise, but some of the happiest occasions have been those when they have brought gifts and trimmed a tree or packed a box for poorer children. In some cases poor children or pupils from a mission school have come and shared in the good times at the Christmas party. There are many ways even during this social time to impress the meaning of Christmas.

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The Christmas Stocking, The Christmas Cake, in *More Mother Stories.* Lindsay.

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These stories are not for Sunday telling, but may be used while little hands are busy making gifts or as a part of the week-day entertainment.

Stories, pictures and songs supplement the Bible teachings and are the means by which we may hope to strengthen the Christmas impression.

One or more Madonna pictures placed in the primary room and allowed to remain there during the entire Christmas season will serve to bring a silent message to the heart of the child.

Gifts for Children to Make

(Continued from page 128)

purposes. A child may make one as a gift to his family, an apple with name and greeting written on it serving as a Christmas card to each member. If the children are to send a tree or box to some family, the basket of names and greetings or rhymes may be hung on the tree or placed on top of the box. Each apple should be arranged to look well in the basket with its tag stuck down through the weaving to hold it securely in place.

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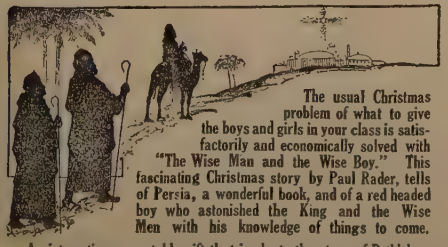

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Adoration of Kings and Shepherds

(Continued from page 118)

up to the knees. Cloaks of soft materials, either striped or plain, or in imitation of sheepskin. Eastern headdresses of different colors. Crooks for the three men to carry, the lamb for the boy.

Kings. Long tunics. Mantles, fastened over the shoulders, the ends held up by the attendants. Turbans, or Arab headdresses, draped with strings of beads, or with jeweled bands. The kings' robes can be improvised from old draperies, scarfs, shawls, and any odds and ends of rich-looking material. A velour curtain makes a good mantle, for instance. Each king should wear a predominant color, such as blue, red, or gold. Their ornaments should be large and showy. Gifts (see Properties).

Kings' attendants. Tunics of rich-looking stuffs, to the knee. Dark stockings, without shoes. Eastern headdresses. A few jewels.

Rehearsals

The fact that there are no speaking parts makes the matter of rehearsals quite simple. The first performance of the pageant was given after one evening of rehearsing the whole cast (in costume) with the choir, and another one for the angels alone.

It seems best not to have children take any but their appropriate parts—the two little angels being girls of about eight, the shepherd boy and the kings' attendants eight to fourteen. Girls of fifteen or over may have the parts of angels, and men of all ages the parts of kings and shepherds. The parts should, of course, be assigned with great care. In a small church, the kings' attendants and some of the angels could be omitted.

The angels should be carefully drilled in the proper method of carrying their candles—the right hand just below the disk, the left six inches or so from the bottom—and in moving slowly and in unison, especially in ascending the steps, kneeling, and bowing their heads, and in keeping accurate spacing in the aisles and in the semicircle. If there are no entrances to the church at the front, the angels must approach from the back. If there is only one door at the front, the angels would appear there and immediately separate, one going to each side-aisle. The one in the aisle nearest the doorway must then wait until the other has reached the end of her aisle, so that both can advance in line.

When the kings are being led in from the door, care should be taken that the pair of angels behind a king and his attendant should stand apart, at the foot of the steps, in order not to obscure the congregation's view of the king as he ascends the steps and prostrates himself.

The rehearsals, as well as the pageant itself, should be conducted in an atmosphere of the utmost dignity, quiet, and reverence. Only so can the pageant become an act of worship.

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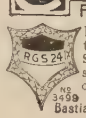

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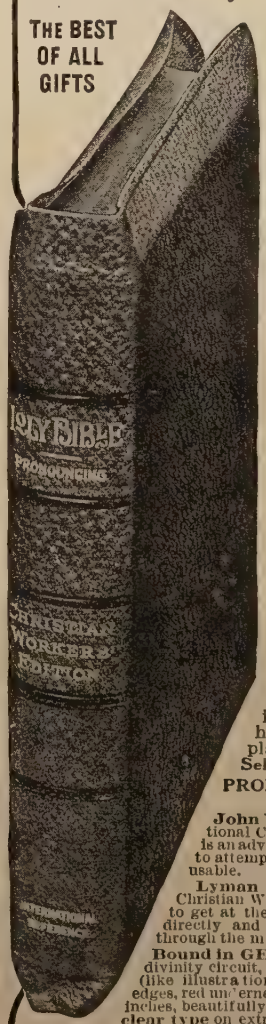

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Current Motion Pictures

Reviewed by ELISABETH EDLAND

From The Holy Bible in Motion Pictures, Presented by *The Christian Herald* in association with Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures, Inc.

As our magazine goes to press before the film companies have Christmas motion pictures available for review the only Christmas films that we can include in this number are those given at the end of the list. To those who desire to show motion pictures at Christmas time we shall be glad to suggest a film program upon request.

The Holy Bible in Motion Pictures. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures, 130-136 West 46th Street, N. Y. C. An unusual picturization of the Bible story for Sunday schools. Will be reviewed in detail in the January CHURCH SCHOOL.

The Fairy and the Waif. 5 reels. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures. A delightful Christmas film for children.

Fresh Fish. 1 reel. Exchange, Educational Film Exchanges, 729 Seventh Avenue, N. Y. C. A combination of cartoons and actual photographs in which the cartoon figures of Bobby Bumps and his dog Fida have some thrilling and comic experiences on real water in a storm.

The Firefighters, Our Gang Series. 2 reels, Exchange, Pathe, 1600 Broadway, N. Y. C. Small-boy doings of "Sunshine Sammy" who, with his two-footed and four-footed friends, equips an elaborate play fire-department and passes through thrilling and comic experiences in a serious attempt to put out a fire. The following eliminations are suggested: All reference to drawing home-brew from container, the sub-title "Bootleg," and final scene of child losing its underclothing.

Content. 1 reel. Exchange, Selznick Picture Corp., 729 Seventh Avenue, N. Y. C. Chinese folk tale. Father of two Chinese boys makes a plea of extreme poverty to king. King offers him immense wealth and life of luxury if he will give up one son, one eye, one arm and one leg. Beggar decides these are greater riches than all the gold in the world, and refusing the king's offer, hastens away, thankful for his own precious possessions.

The Lone Indian. 1 reel. Exchange, Famous Players-Lasky Corp., 729 Seventh Avenue, N. Y. C. Young Indian is sent into the woods alone to develop self-reliance and strength of character. He paddles from lower end of St. John's Lake to upper end. Shooting the rapids, feeling trees, hunting game, fishing and protecting himself from harm in the wild

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seclusion of nature, he finally becomes a Brave.

The Ghost of Slumber Mountain. 1 reel. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures. Man tells group of children of experiences at camp with prehistoric animals, which all turns out to be a dream.

Treeland. 1 reel. Exchange, Prizma, 110 West 40th Street, N. Y. C. Colored film showing fruit trees in blossom, reflections of trees in water, and winter scenes.

The Fish-Hawk at Home. 1 reel. Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures. Views of the whole Fish-Hawk family from the time the eggs are laid until the time the young are old enough to take care of themselves. Pictures taken on Gardiner's Island. Mother-bird entering her nest, fresh-laid eggs, chicks coming out of shell, feeding the young; mother stands over young with outspread wings, father Fish-Hawk provides family with fresh fish.

Red Man's Sport, Sport Review. 1 reel. Exchange, Goldwyn, 729 Seventh Avenue, N. Y. C. Banff, Calif., Indian women putting up tents and preparing food, parading before white guests at Hotel, shooting bow and arrow, horse racing, "ladies fair," squaw race, horse back wrestling.

Western Stuff, Sport Review. 1 reel. Exchange, Goldwyn. Scenes taken on ranch in Western Canadian Rockies, trying to saddle and ride wild pony, scenic views.

The Birth of Christ. 5 reels; *Christmas Carols* (Dickens' famous story) 3 reels; *Holy Night.* 1 reel; *The Holy Land.* 1 reel; *Scenic of Bethlehem and Jerusalem,* Exchange, National Non-Theatrical Motion Pictures, 130 West 46th St., New York City.

Christmas Carol Customs

(Continued from page 120)

songs accompanied by the "zambomba." A form of this "bambino" custom is followed by Roman Catholics to this day in some countries.

Russia and Poland also used the dance in connection with Christmas carols. In Russia's more placid days the school children and the peasants used to sing carols beneath the windows of rich folk, who tossed coins to the serenaders.

The celebration of Christmas in Scotland was anathematized so severely by John Knox in his preaching, as being too popish and ecclesiastical in spirit, that the festival was not generally observed, until as during the past century English customs have gained influence in that land. Scottish carols are, therefore, rare; although we have a few ancient examples, such as the old verse, sung to *Baw-lula law*:

"I come from hevin to tell
The best nowellis that ever befell.

. . . . . .

This day to yow is borne ane childe
Of Marie meike and Virgine mylde,
That blissit barne, bining and kynde,
Sall yow rejoyce baith heart and mynd."

It is in England, however, that Christmas

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NOTE—In many States the law now forbids the use of the single cup at the communion service. It should not be necessary to await this in your own locality. The old style is unclean and unsanitary. Many thoroughly good Christians have refrained from partaking of communion for this very reason. If you have not yet adopted the modern, sanitary communion cup, let this be one of your first forward steps in 1922.

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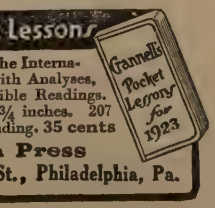

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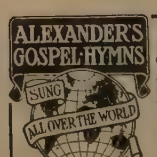

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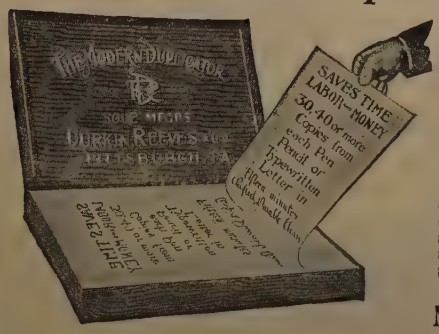

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Keeping Christmas with Little Children

(Continued from page 131)

quite as adequately as when she sits with them in the circle. It is even possible to sing Christmas songs, but of course this must be informal, as it is often necessarily interrupted by requests for more material or questions about the work.

At last the eventful day when the last bit of work is finished has arrived. It is the Sunday before Christmas. Anticipation is at fever heat. The real home Christmas is but a few days away. The Christmas stories have all been told but there is no lack of interest nor of things to do on this last Sunday. First, the gift must be prepared for delivery. If the project has been a Christmas tree, this is the long-expected day when it is to be trimmed. The toy box must be emptied, if that has been the plan carried out, its contents looked over and talked over while they are stowed away for the last time. Scrapbooks must be wrapped and every child must have a part, one turning up one side of the paper and another the other, and so on.

When this is completed the children are in a mood to sing:

"Clap your hands in merry cheer,
Christmas day is almost here."

And perhaps they will spontaneously romp about with the joy, not of getting but of giving. The soft strains of *Holy Night* call them to their chairs and, after singing the Christmas carol and breathing a prayer of thanks for the Christmas Baby, they are ready to hear all over again, with unabated interest, the stories of the manger and the Wise-men.

Shall the beginners class have no connection with the rest of the school on this Sunday of Sundays? Yes, when the tree is trimmed it shall be carried to the assembly room of the upper school or to any classroom where the pupils have been working to bring Christmas cheer to others. Here it shall be placed close by the dinner or the toys or whatever has been planned by the older ones, thus giving the idea that every one who loves the Christ-child keeps Christmas as they have sought to keep it and that they are co-operating members of the big school family. This is the time, perhaps, to sing the Christmas carol in simple, childlike fashion as an act of praise in this larger house of worship, not as a stunt to be applauded. This will consume but ten minutes and there will be plenty of time for retelling the beloved stories, playing and talking in one's own room. There will be no weary little legs hanging down from a high church pew, no spoiled children, no fret of rehearsal, but the Christ-child will reign in the hearts of all.

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Discovering God

(Continued from page 106)

terms so difficult that thou seekest no more of God than that thou hast? Art thou well content, and conscious of no deep need, art undisturbed by the need of thy fellow?"

To either one of these questions one must answer "Yes." God grant that for those who teach children and guide youth in these days it may never be *Yes* to the second question. We who teach and those whom we have taught have made but slow progress in the search for God and his will for man, because so often in the past the honest affirmative answer could be given to this second question *only*.

Let us begin the search anew. Let us enter upon the quest after God as those whom nothing can deter, nothing can turn aside, nothing can daunt—as those who must find him and finding shall so fire the souls of those we teach that they in turn shall discover more than we, until the day comes when men shall know God and shall serve him with the whole heart.

"God give ye Merry Christmas-tide
And give ye all to see,
How blessed 'tis to give, and know
The grace of Charity.
Rejoice, for once at Bethlehem
To give His life away,
Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ,
Was born on Christmas Day."

Will the Christ Child or Santa Claus

be the central figure in your church school Christmas this year? Doubtless there is a place for Santa. If, however, you would make your Christmas thoroughly educational and deeply Christian use a service like one of those described herewith.

THE ADORATION OF THE KINGS AND SHEPHERDS
A Pageant of the Nativity — ***Mildred Emily Cook***
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